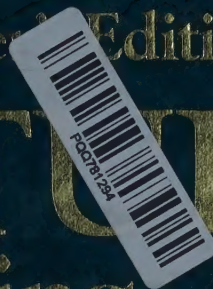


Annotated Teacher's Edition



# ADVENTURES in Reading

PEGASUS EDITION



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**PUPILS** to whom this textbook is issued must not write on any page or mark any part of it in any way, consumable textbooks excepted.

1. Teachers should see that the pupil's name is clearly written in ink in the spaces above in every book issued.
2. The following terms should be used in recording the condition of the book: New; Good; Fair; Poor; Bad.



Soliloquy	Sonnet
Monologue	Tragedy
Aside	Plot structure
Dramatic irony	↳ exposition
Oxymoron	climax/crisis } Δ
Speaker	Resolution
Diction	IMAGERY
Dialect	figurative language
Simile	rhythm
metaphor	meter
personification	rhyme
internal rhyme	rhyme scheme
REALISM	onomatopoeia
idealism	alliteration
Denotation	assonance.
Connotation	literal language
	figurative language









# ADVENTURES IN LITERATURE

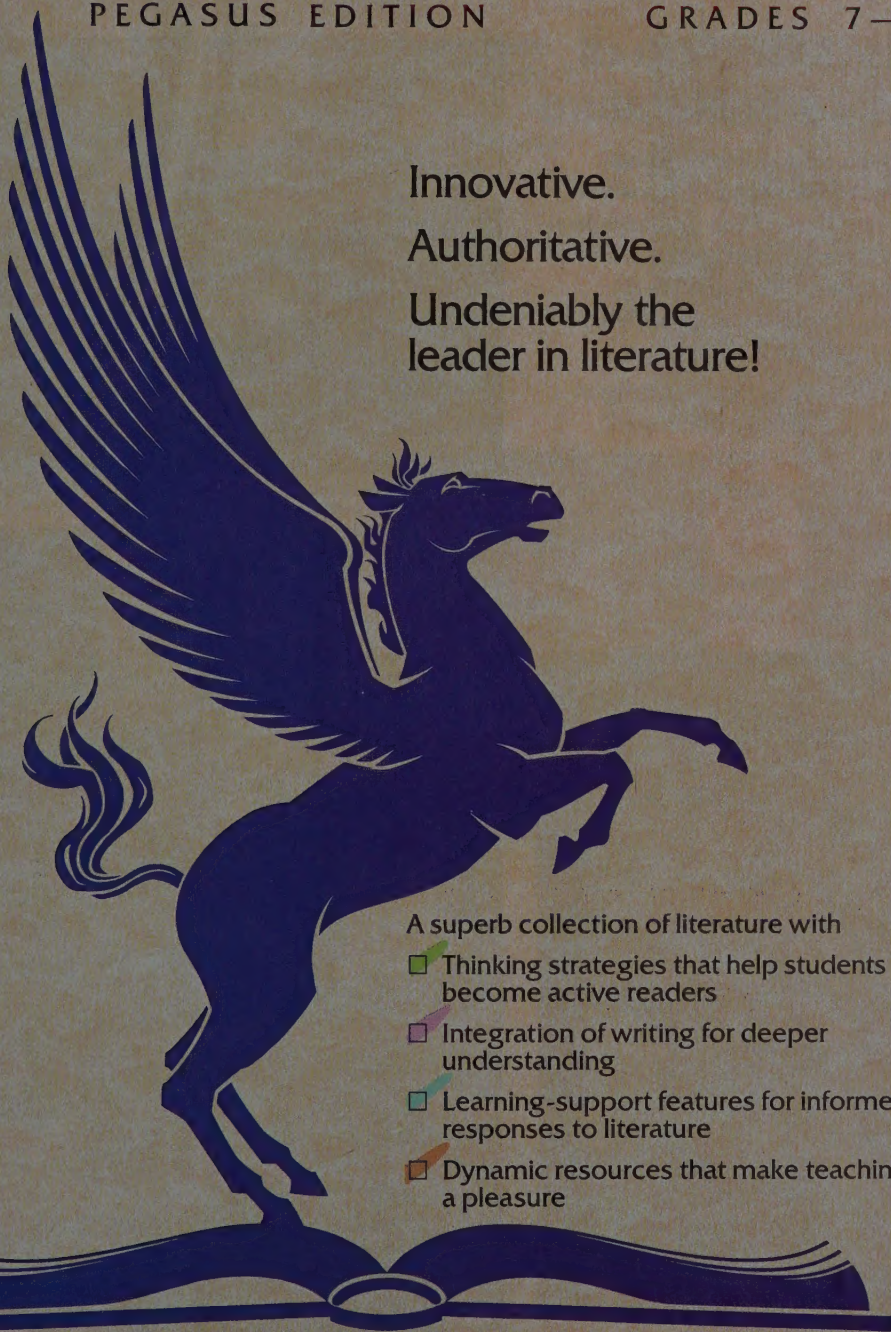
PEGASUS EDITION

GRADES 7–12

Innovative.  
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-  Thinking strategies that help students become active readers
-  Integration of writing for deeper understanding
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The program features a fascinating treatment of classical and Norse mythology in Grade 7, intriguing epics in Grade 8, a modern screenplay in Grade 10, and a complete novel or novella in every grade.

*For teaching flexibility, the program provides for instruction organized by genre or theme.*



*Annabel Lee* (1911) by W. L. Taylor. Watercolor.  
© Curtis Publishing Co./N.Y. Public Library Picture Collection



*New York, Lower Manhattan* (1921) by Stefan Hirsch (1899-1964).  
Oil on canvas. The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.



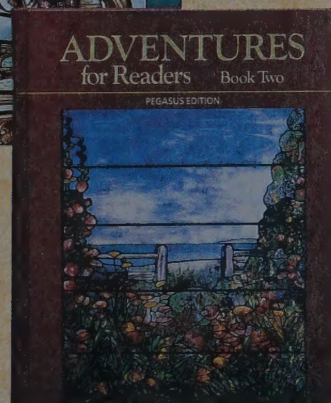
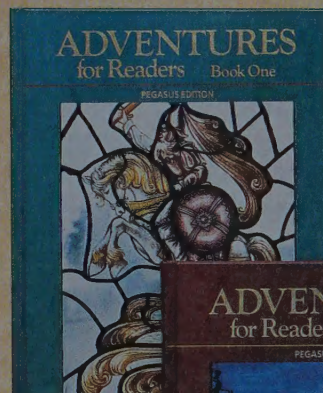
*Romeo and Juliet-Capulet's Garden* by Charles Edward Delort  
(1841-1895). Oil on panel.  
Collection, Sandor Korein. Courtesy Kurt E. Schon, Ltd.



### Adventures for Readers: Book One (Grade 7)

### Adventures for Readers: Book Two (Grade 8)

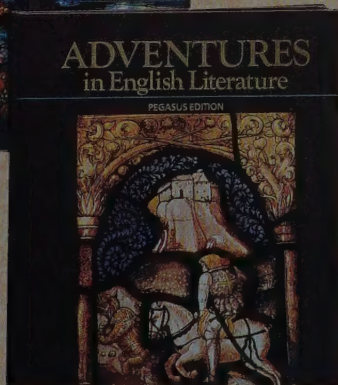
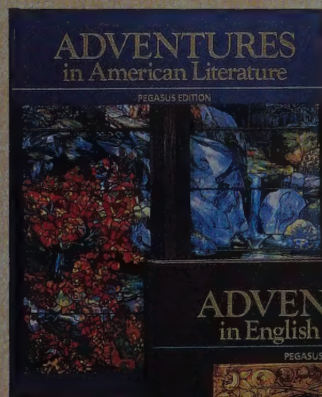
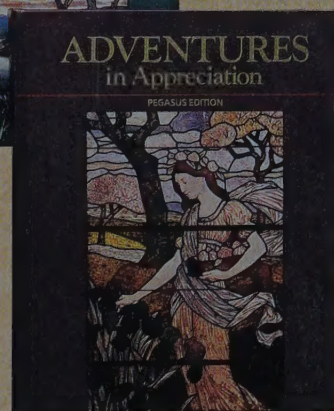
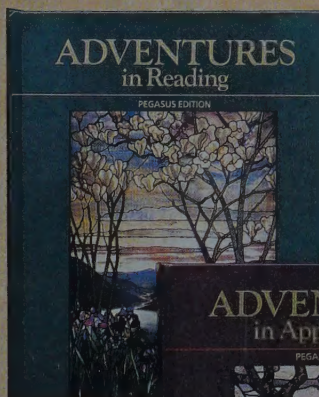
Students embark on an adventure through literature by exploring familiar themes, learning about forms of literature, and investigating the roots of their literary heritage. *Book Two*, building on the foundation of *Book One*, provides new experiences to expand concepts.



### Adventures in Reading (Grade 9)

### Adventures in Appreciation (Grade 10)

Students investigate the elements of major literary forms. Learning focuses on genre, with increased attention to understanding elements that enhance appreciation of short stories, nonfiction, epics, drama, poetry, and novels.



### Adventures in American Literature (Grade 11)

### Adventures in English Literature (Grade 12)

Students trace the development of American and English literature from John Smith to Alice Walker and from Beowulf to Samuel Beckett. Divided into historical periods and literary movements, these anthologies feature significant works from important authors.



# Thinking strategies for active reading

To encourage active reading, a variety of instructional strategies enables students to read, understand, and *think* about literature. As they experience selections, students develop strategies for successfully exploring other selections.

**Close Reading** sections use brief selections to model techniques for reading and thinking about literature—including short stories, poems, essays, and plays.

## Guidelines for Reading a Poem

1. Read the poem aloud at least once. Look for complete thoughts instead of reading line by line. Commas, semicolons, periods, and other marks of punctuation tell you where to pause. Sara Teasdale does not expect the reader to pause at the end of each line. In the last stanza, she signals no pause until the end of the poem, signifying that she wishes no break in thought.
2. Note the effects of specific words. In poetry, a word often has special connotations, or associations. The word *floats*, in line 2, for example, has the denotative meaning of "drifts or moves slowly on the surface of a fluid." In the context of the poem, however, it suggests a sound that is so light and exquisite that it seems to be supported by air in the way that a buoyant object is supported by water.
3. Note the comparisons chosen by the poet. In lines 7–8 Teasdale compares the blossoming pear trees to girls in white dresses, an image that suggests beauty and innocence.
4. Listen for the sound effects. Note the emphasis achieved by Teasdale's pattern of rhyme in each stanza of the poem.
5. Write a paraphrase of any lines that need clarification or simplification. A paraphrase helps a reader understand imagery and figurative language. A paraphrase of the first two lines might look like this: "The notes of the song are fitted together into a pattern the way threads are woven into cloth. The sound is so soft and gentle that it seems suspended in air, as if it were lifted up and carried along." A paraphrase also supplies connections in thought where words have been omitted. A paraphrase of line 11 might read: "The poet says she must taste or sample the raindrops with her lips."
6. Arrive at the central idea or meaning of the poem. Try to state this theme in one or two sentences. In "May Day," Teasdale seems to be saying that since life is short, one ought to fill time with the enjoyment of natural beauty.

432 POETRY

## CLOSE READING OF A SELECTION

### Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Reading literature calls for you to follow carefully the sequence of events, to determine how one event may cause or affect a future event, and to understand the writer's purpose or the main idea of a selection. You must also *infer* or make logical guesses about characters and events when the writer doesn't tell you something directly. Reading demands action: you must question the writer's purpose, use of particular words, inclusion of some facts and omission of others. You must be aware of *what* the author is doing, *how* the author is doing it, and *why*.

In the following selection, Annie Dillard, an American writer, shows how her discovery of a book led to her realizing that a special relationship exists between a reader and an author. Use the notes alongside the selection to guide you in your reading. Then turn to the analysis on page 6.

### FROM An American Childhood ANNIE DILLARD

The Homewood Library had graven<sup>1</sup> across its enormous stone facade: *READ TO THE PEOPLE*. In the evenings, neighborhood people—the men and women of Homewood—browsed in the library, and brought their children. By day, the two vaulted rooms, the adults' and children's sections, were almost empty. The kind Homewood librarians, after a trial period, had given me a card to the adult section. This was an enormous silent

**Thinking Model**  
Why does Dillard mention the inscription?

What can we infer about Dillard from this statement?

<sup>1</sup> graven: inscribed.

2 THEMES IN LITERATURE

From *Adventures for Readers: Book Two*

**Thinking Model** notes in side margins show students how active readers respond to literature.

Clear, helpful **Guidelines** suggest strategies for active reading—including responding to clues, anticipating outcomes, and drawing conclusions.

**Developing Skills in Critical Thinking** (not shown) helps students think about and evaluate literature as they read. These features emphasize such skills as analyzing, inferring, evaluating, and comparing and contrasting.



To improve comprehension, **headnotes** help students set purposes for reading and focus on elements of special importance in the selection.

night he ate all that was given him till he could eat no more, and went to bed on Teddy's shoulder, where Teddy's mother saw him when she came to look late at night.

"He saved our lives and Teddy's life," she said to her husband. "Just think, he saved all our lives!"

Rikki-tikki woke up with a jump, for the mongooses are light sleepers.

"Oh, it's you," said he. "What are you bothering for? All the cobras are dead; and if they weren't, I'm here."

Rikki-tikki had a right to be proud of himself; but he did not grow too proud, and he kept that garden as a mongoose should keep it, with tooth and jump and spring and bite, till never a cobra dared show its head inside the walls.

### Reading Check

1. According to the author, why is it difficult to frighten a mongoose?
2. What is the motto of Rikki-tikki's family?
3. Why is Nag afraid of Rikki-tikki?
4. Who are Rikki-tikki's allies in the war against the cobras?
5. What happens to Rikki-tikki's eyes when he gets angry?
6. Why does Rikki-tikki refrain from eating Karai?
7. Who warns Rikki-tikki that the cobras may come into the house?
8. Why do the cobras want to kill the people in the house?
9. What does Rikki-tikki consider a greater danger than Nag and Nagaina?
10. Where does Rikki-tikki find the cobra's eggs?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The major characters in the story are animals that have been given human motives. Identify the major characters in the story that represent the forces of good and those that represent the forces of evil.

2. What conflict, or struggle, does Rikki-tikki face?

3. Kipling says that his story is about "the great war that Rikki-tikki-tavi fought single-handed. . . ." a. Identify at least five "battles" in this war. b. At what points in the war does Darzee's wife assist Rikki-tikki?

4. Match each character in the left-hand column with one or more of the adjectives in the right-hand column. You may use each adjective as often as you like, but be sure to use each adjective at least once. Support your answers with passages from the story.

Darzee	cold
	cunning
	curious
	feather-trained
	intelligent
Darzee's wife	proud
	quick-witted
	resourceful
Rikki-tikki	sensible
	stupid
	valiant
	wicked
Nagina	wise

5. Writers frequently treat animals in stories as if they could think, talk, and feel as people do. a. Why do you suppose they write about animals in this way? b. What other selections have you read in which animals have been given human characteristics?

6. Choose passages of description, conversation, or exciting events that you find appealing. Prepare to read them aloud in class.

Rikki-tikki-tavi 259

### THE SPEAKER

The poet Robert Frost once said that a poem is "spoken by a person in a scene—in character, in a setting." This person, or *speaker*, is often simply the poet, but may be someone or something altogether different from the poet. Through the ages, poets have delighted in disguising their voices, like actors, and speaking as characters.

One aid to understanding a poem is to identify its speaker. Your knowledge of who or what the speaker is will help you understand other things about the poem: where and when the poem is set, what situation it describes, what story it tells.

## The Face in the Mirror

ROBERT GRAVES

*This poem is a self-portrait. What is the speaker's attitude toward his own face? How do you know that he regards himself ironically?*

Gray haunted eyes, absentmindedly glaring  
From wide, uneven orbits; one brow drooping  
Somewhat over the eye  
Because of a missile fragment still inhering,<  
Skin deep, as a foolish record of old-world fighting.

5

Crookedly broken nose—low tacking caused it;  
Cheeks, furrowed; coarse gray hair, flying frenetic;  
Forehead, wrinkled and high;  
Jowls, prominent; ears, large; jaw, pugilistic,  
Teeth, few; lips, full and ruddy; mouth ascetic.\*

10

I pause with razor poised, scowling derision  
At the mirrored man whose beard needs my attention,  
And once more ask him why  
He still stands ready, with a boy's presumption,  
To court the queen in her high silk pavilion.

15

4. inhering (in-ber'ang): remaining fixed. 9. pugilistic (pyoo'ja-lu'tik): like a fighter.  
10. ascetic (a-sit'ik): severe.

298 POETRY

From *Adventures in Reading*

Following each prose selection, **Reading Check** provides literal-level questions that assess comprehension and help prepare students for in-depth discussions.

To promote thorough understanding, **For Study and Discussion** presents sets of questions logically organized into subsets. Each subset focuses on a single element, feature, or event, leading students, when appropriate, through the thinking process—from analyzing, through interpreting, to evaluating.



# Integration of writing for deeper understanding

Throughout the program, opportunities for responding to literature in writing expand understanding and appreciation, while refining composition skills through the writing process.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

### The Writing Process

We often refer to writing an essay as a *process*, which consists of six key stages or phases: **pre-writing, writing, evaluating, revising, proof-reading, and writing the final version.** In this process, much of the critical work—the thinking and planning—precedes the actual writing

ics. The last stage, **writing the final version**, involves preparing a clean copy and then proof-reading it to catch any omissions or errors.

The stages of the writing process are interdependent, usually resulting in a "back and forth" movement among the stages. Rarely does a

stage entirely before moving on to the next stage. He or she progresses in a series of stages to the next. For example, on paper in the first draft may discover that additional evidence is needed to support a point or that the paper needs to be reorganized while reorganizing. This interplay is a natural part of writing—for

each stage devoted to each stage of assignments. During a writing process, you will have limited time and to proofread your work. You may have weeks to prepare your essay. The steps in this process are the development of

### Sample Examination Questions and Answers

On the following pages you will find some sample examination questions and answers for study and discussion. Note that the questions or assignments (shown in italics) may be phrased as essay topics.

#### QUESTION

*Puritan writing is pervaded by a belief in grace, the standard of plainness in language, and conviction of a divine mission in the New World. How are these three aspects of Puritanism illustrated in the works of William Bradford, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor, and Jonathan Edwards?*

#### DEVELOPING AN ANSWER

This is an exercise in illustration. In naming the three aspects of Puritan writing, the question provides you with a thesis statement. Still, you must decide how to proceed.

There are two possible approaches: 1) Treat each of the authors as examples from various works; 2) Treat each author as an example from a single work.

At this method, you are required to demonstrate each author's work. That will result in a long-winded essay. If you choose the second approach, you can cite examples of each aspect for your presentation. Then an approach, you can jot down some prewriting in writing. These notes can be arranged under the assignment:

*"Swiftness" expresses the gift of grace as a miraculous*

*portrait of Sarah Pierrepont describes someone who is*

*presents a horrifying picture of the torments in store for experienced grace.*

*Of Plymouth Plantation illustrates plain style in prose: in clear order.*

*Samson's "Upon the Burning of Our House" shows plain homely words from domestic life; direct statement.*

*es clear statement of the Puritan vision of America as a land of God's intervention. Instrument of God.*

TURE

From *Adventures in American Literature*

From *Adventures in American Literature*

Using the writing process, **Writing About Literature** suggests helpful strategies and provides clear models for answering examination questions and writing essays.

#### WRITING AN ANSWER

You now have a scheme for writing the essay.

#### INTRODUCTION

Restate question.

Indicate intent of essay.

#### BODY

In topic sentence show grasp of concept.

In supporting statements identify each work by title and author.

Demonstrate close reading of selections.

Use a topic sentence in each paragraph.

Provide supporting statements.

Provide a topic sentence.

Use direct quotations as evidence.

#### CONCLUSION

Puritan writing in colonial America was pervaded by a belief in grace, the standard of plainness in language, and the conviction of a divine mission in the New World. We can appreciate how central these three aspects were to the Puritan experience by examining the work of four authors: the historian William Bradford, the poets Anne Bradstreet and Edward Taylor, and the Puritan minister Jonathan Edwards.

Puritans believed strongly in the possibility of self-transformation, of purifying human nature by achieving grace. In "Huswifery," Edward Taylor explains the gift of grace by comparing the miraculous transformation of the soul—God's handiwork—to the transformation of raw wool into beautiful robes. In his portrait of Sarah Pierrepont, Jonathan Edwards gives us a picture of someone who is under the influence of grace. Free of sin, she enjoys the benevolence of God. Her life is filled with joy and sweetness. Edwards is also capable of describing vividly the torments of those who are not elect and who must suffer everlasting damnation. In his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," he depicts the sinner as a loathsome insect hanging by a slender thread over the pit of Hell.

Puritans valued clarity and simplicity in language and aimed for a style that would be intelligible to every reader. William Bradford's history, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, illustrates characteristics of this style in prose. Bradford tends to use simple words in clear order. He does not use many polysyllabic words, and he avoids elegant phrasing. The passage in which he introduces Samoset is a model of the plain style. In "Upon the Burning of Our House," Anne Bradstreet illustrates the plain style in poetry. She chooses short, homely words from domestic life, such as *roof, table, and chest*. She relies on direct statement rather than on metaphor.

The Puritans had a sense of being God's appointed people, and they envisioned America as the Promised Land. Bradford's history gives us a clear statement of the Puritan vision of the New World as a land under divine guidance. He frequently points to God's intervention on behalf of the Puritan settlers. He cites the "just hand of God" in punishing a cruel and profane sailor. He tells how God's providence saved a man from drowning. He attributes the survival of the Puritans during their terrible first winter to the benevolence of God, and he refers to Squanto, the Indian who helped the settlers, as a "special instrument" of God.

As these examples indicate, the spiritual values that are characteristic of the Puritans are reflected in early American literature.

Length: 430 words

Answering Examination Questions 1027



Related to unit selections, an array of writing activities—**Writing About Literature, Descriptive Writing, Narrative Writing, Expository Writing, and Creative Writing**—helps students strengthen composition and critical analysis skills through the writing process.

Through **Practice in Reading and Writing**, Grades 7–10, students refine reading and writing skills by analyzing authors' techniques in model passages and applying similar techniques to their own writing.

### Writing About Literature

#### Explaining Symbolism in the Story

The word world appears several times in "A White Heron." Write an essay explaining how Sylvia comes to understand the larger world or life itself as it is symbolized by the setting. Why is it symbolically appropriate that she climbs higher than the birds and that her face looks "like a pale star"? How is the vision she attains richer symbolically because it includes the villages, the sea, white-sailed ships, church steeples, the bright sunrise, and so much of nature?

### About the Author

#### Sarah Orne Jewett (1849–1909)



On her forty-eighth birthday, Sarah Orne Jewett said, "This is my birthday and I am always nine years old." Jewett recorded the serenity and happiness of her childhood in South Berwick, Maine, where she spent her entire life. Because she was chronically ill as a child, she had little formal schooling. Her father, a country doctor, took her with him whenever he visited his patients, and her desire to write about these country people came early. "When I was, perhaps, fifteen, the first 'city boarders' began to make their appearance near Berwick; and the way they misconstrued the country people and made game of their peculiarities fired me with each the world the awkward, ned to think. I r grand, simple omes from her Country of the

### Descriptive Writing

#### Using Figures of Speech

This author uses several figures of speech to help you imagine Sylvia's difficulties and her feelings as she climbs the tall pine tree. Notice

## PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

### Expository Writing

Exposition is writing that gives information, explains something, or expresses an opinion. Exposition is generally built around a central, or the writer develops by ns, or a combination of expository writing follo- the controlling idea story paragraph or part- the body of the piece, reinforced in the con- may be used for individ- then the central idea of in a topic sentence. This by details, examples, or tion of this paragraph a Tree" by Edwin Way

1. What is the controlling idea of the paragraph and where is it expressed?
2. How does Teale support this idea in the paragraph?
3. What transitional words help to make clear the movement of the author's thought?
4. Does the paragraph have a concluding, or "clincher," sentence?

Here is another paragraph from the same essay. What is the logic of organization?

Like a river flowing into a desert, the life stream of the tree dwindled and disappeared before it reached the topmost twigs. They died first. The leaf at the tip of each twig, the last to unfold, was the first to wither and fall. Then, little by little, the twig itself became dead and dry. This process of dissolution, in the manner of a movie run backward, reversed the development of growth. Just as, cell by cell, the twig had grown outward toward the tip, so now death spread, cell by cell, backward from the tip.

### Suggestions for Writing

Write a paragraph of exposition developing one of these topics or a topic of your own:

- How to Start a Stamp (Coin) Collection
- Methods of Energy Conservation
- Building a Classroom Terrarium
- Recycling Clothes (Furniture)

Practice in Reading and Writing 289

### CRITICAL READING AND WRITING

#### A House Divided and Restored

1. In an essay, examine the impact of the Civil War on the writers of this period. What different perspectives on the war do you discern among these authors? In your discussion, consider the work of at least two of the following writers: Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, Walt Whitman, Henry Timrod, and Ambrose Bierce.

2. As the following statements suggest, both Walt Whitman and Mark Twain offered something new to American letters:

[In *Song of Myself* the poet expressed] an enormous brilliant egotism. . . . The idea of perfect freedom, of the "eligibility" of the self to everything else—the nation, the cosmos, all other selves—this is the valuable illusion created by Whitman's first great poem.

Richard Chase  
(from *Walt Whitman Reconsidered*)

[Twain's] principal service to the American language . . . lay within the recognized limits of literary prose. Within those limits he was a radical innovator, a prime mover who changed the medium by incorporating in it the syntax, the idioms, and especially the vocabulary of the common life.

Bernard DeVoto  
(from the Introduction to  
*The Portable Mark Twain*)

In an essay, discuss either of these statements in light of the selections by Whitman or Twain you have read in this unit. Be sure to refer to particular passages in the selections.

3. This period is notable for the rise of the local-color movement in literature. As stated on page 341, the local-color movement "formed an important transition between Romanticism and realism. In its close attention to the dialect, customs, and character types of a particular region, local-color writing showed the kind of objective observation of social facts that is typical of realism. But in its treatment of human emotion and motivation, local-color fiction was often sentimental." In what ways do the selections in this unit blend realism and Romanticism? In an essay, discuss the work of two of the following authors: Mark Twain, Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce.

Critical Reading and Writing 439

From  
*Adventures in  
Appreciation*

From  
*Adventures in  
Reading*

**Critical Reading and Writing, Grades 11 and 12**, encourages students to think about the relationship of unit selections and to write responses to a variety of essay questions.

# Learning-support Features for informed responses to literature

**Literary Elements** helps students analyze and understand plot, conflict, character development, or other literary devices in a selection.

**Language and Vocabulary** encourages students to analyze words and expressions within selections by focusing on context clues, word origins, stylistic devices, dialect, usage, and levels of language. Vocabulary development grows naturally from the study of literature.

**Extending Your Study** provides opportunities for independent research connecting literature to other subjects—analyzing paintings, listening to musical interpretations of literature, researching legends, and investigating historical facts.

**For Further Reading**—at the end of each unit—lists related literature that encourages students to extend their study.

## Literary Elements

### Understanding Methods of Characterization

The way in which writers let you know what the individuals in a story are like is called **characterization**. When writers *tell* you what characters are like through description, they are using **direct characterization**. For instance, Kipling tells us: "Chuchundra is a broken-hearted little beast. He whimpers and cheeps all the night, trying to make up his mind to run into the middle of the room, but he never gets there."

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Words of Indian Origin

When Rudyard Kipling wrote "Rikki-tikki-tavi," India was part of the British Empire. Many words of Indian origin found their way into the English language. The word *bungalow*, for example, is an *Anglo-Indian* word; it is an English word borrowed from an Indian language. The origin of bungalow is the Hindi word *bāngla*, which means "thatched house."

Here are some other words that are derived from Indian languages. Look them up in a dic-

## For Further Reading

1. The grandeur of the natural setting in Thomas Douglass's *In Nature's Wonderland*, page 209, dwarfing the solitary human figure, suggests that this is nature seen from the Romantic point of view. How does the use of light in the painting contribute to this effect?
2. *The Philosophers' Camp* by William James Stillman, page 222, portrays an activity that Emerson very much enjoyed, a camping trip of the Adirondack Club. These companionable intellectuals liked to get out to the woods and lakes to hunt and fish but most of all to talk and reflect in a natural setting. Nevertheless, in Stillman's painting, Emerson, who stands at the center next to the largest tree, is clearly

Melville looks at life among the Types and contrasts it with life in Western civilization, he is deep in the interior of the island and observing a native society then unknown to Americans and Europeans. What kinds of changes would he expect to come from Western intrusion into Type life?

5. The drawings by Henry Lovie of the Battle of Shiloh, page 294, take up the scene at a different time from Melville's "Shiloh: A Requiem." Can the poem and the drawings nevertheless be related to each other as responses to an event? Could Lovie's drawings have portrayed an empty scene, after the men and horses and flags and cannons were gone, and captured the same mood as Melville does in his poem?

6. Joseph Meeker's *The Land of Evangeline*, page

## For Further Reading

Anouilh, Jean, *Antigone* (included in *Anouilh's Five Plays*, paperback, Hill & Wang, 1958)  
Anouilh's adaptation of this ancient Greek drama was first performed in 1944 in Nazi-occupied Paris. Anouilh concentrates on the character of Antigone, the heroic individual who says no to a chief of state who values law more than freedom.

Boh, Robert, *A Man for All Seasons* (paperback, Vintage, 1966)  
This tragedy focuses on the conflict faced by Thomas More, the popular Chancellor of England, who obeyed his conscience instead of his King (Henry VIII) and who paid for his convictions with his life. The play was made into an Academy Award-winning movie.

Gibson, William, *The Miracle Worker* (Knopf, 1957; paperback, Bantam)  
Gibson's appealing realistic drama tells how Annie Sullivan taught the blind and deaf Helen Keller to speak. The play has appeared on television, on stage, and in the movies.

Hansberry, Lorraine, *A Raisin in the Sun* (paperback, Signet, 1961)  
Winner of the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for the 1958-1959 season, this realistic play shows the tensions that erupt as a Chicago family tries to start a new life after coming into a legacy.

Hewes, Henry, editor, *Famous American Plays of the 1940s* (paperback, Dell, 1960)  
Five memorable American plays are included in this book: *The Skin of Our Teeth* by Thornton Wilder; *Home of the Brave* by Arthur Laurents; *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller; *Lost in the Stars* by Maxwell Anderson; and *The Member of the Wedding* by Carson McCullers.

Kaufman, George, and Moss Hart, *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (included in *Six Modern American Plays*, paperback, Modern Library, 1966)  
This comedy is based on a hilarious possibility: what if someone came for dinner and just never went home?

Kesserling, Joseph, *Arsenic and Old Lace* (in *Comedy Tonight! Broadway Hits in Favorite Plays*, edited by Mary Sherwin, Doubleday, 1977)  
This comedy features two kindly Victorian ladies who kill lonely old men with poisoned elderberry wine, as their frantic nephew tries to put a stop to the mayhem.

Lindsay, Howard, and Russel Crouse, *Life with Father and Life with Mother* (Knopf, 1953)  
This is an illustrated edition of two great comedies about family life in America.

Shaw, George Bernard, *The Portent Bernard Shaw* (paperback, Penguin, 1977)  
This collection of some of the works of the great Irish satirist includes *The Devil's Disciple*, a comedy set during the American Revolution, and *Pigswill*, a comedy and love story about a poor Cockney Bowser-seller who is transformed by her tutor, Henry Higgins.

Sweetkind, Morris, editor, *Ten Great One-Act Plays* (paperback, Bantam)  
*The Bear*, a boisterous farce by the Russian dramatist Anton Chekhov, and *Riders to the Sea*, a brooding tragedy by the Irish dramatist John Millington Synge, are among the one-act dramas included here.

Van Druen, John, *I Remember Mama* (included in *Eight American Ethnic Plays*, edited by Francis Grifflith and Joseph Merand, paperback, Scribner's, 1974)  
Based on Kathryn Forbes's novel *Mama's Bank Account*, this comedy tells of a Norwegian family living in San Francisco, whose security for years is based on a mythical "bank account."

Williams, Tennessee, *The Glass Menagerie* (included in *Six Modern American Plays*, paperback, Modern Library, 1966)

An American classic, Williams's play dramatizes the effort of a mother to push her withdrawn, sensitive daughter into the "real" world of boy-friends and jobs. The poignant story of Laura's trembling efforts to please her first "gentleman caller" is remembered by her brother Tom.

For Further Reading 743

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Interesting author biographies help students gain new insight into selections.



Doris Lessing is one of a number of African authors writing in English who have settled in Europe. A characteristic most of these writers have in common is a deep affection for their own continent coupled with a reluctance to live in it and a sharp eye for its defects. Lessing has written that writers brought up in Africa have the advantage of "being at the center of a modern battlefield, part of a society in rapid, dramatic change." But, she notes, being too close to this battlefield, too exposed to the brutalities that are a part of the battle, tends to limit the writer's point of view and dry up the imagination. Therefore, it becomes necessary for African writers to leave their countries and gain the perspective that travel and distance give. "I believe that the chief gift from Africa to writers, white and black, is the continent itself, its presence, which for some people is like an old fever, latent always in their blood; or like an old wound throbbing in the bones as the air changes."

The daughter of British parents, Lessing was born in Persia and grew up in Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. In 1949 she settled in England. Since living there, she has written a number of novels, many short stories, and some poetry. In her book *In Pursuit of the English*, she gives an absorbing account of her early years in England. Her typical heroine is a frustrated, highly intellectual young woman who struggles against the inadequacies of her environment, to realize herself. Her great novel *The Golden Notebook* marks the beginning of wide experimentation in psychological fiction. In two remarkable novels of the 1970s, *Briefing for a Descent*



Doris Lessing  
Fox London Photo Library

into Hell and *The Memoirs of a Survivor*, Lessing turns to what she calls the mysterious "inner space" of the mind. Her great theme is the growth in "how we see things," the real feelings of people and how they come to discover them.

Lessing is a very conscious, probing writer, greatly preoccupied with social questions. One critic has summed up her work as "enormously lucid socio logical journalism." There is a strong didactic streak in her work: not only do her novels explore social questions but they take a very clear stand on them. Yet as indicated by her monumental sequence of science-fiction novels, beginning with *Shikasta* (1979), she puts a great deal of imagination into choosing where she stands. The *London Times* has called her "not only the best woman novelist we have, but one of the most serious and intelligent and honest writers of the whole postwar generation."

Doris Lessing 903



*The Ambassadors* (1533) by Hans Holbein the Younger (1497-1543). Oil and tempera on wood. The objects on the table represent the arts and sciences

### The Renaissance in Europe

The period of European history and culture traditionally known as the Renaissance began in Italy during the fourteenth century and extended, in England at least, past the middle of the seventeenth century. Renaissance means "rebirth"—the "rebirth" of those intellectual and artistic energies that characterized ancient Greek and Roman civilization, and with this the awakening of a whole range of new interests in human beings and the world they lived in. Of course Renaissance, like other very broad historical terms, must not be understood too literally. People in the Middle Ages were not entirely ignorant of those aspects of Greek and Roman culture supposedly "reborn" during the Renaissance. Historians have taught us not to think of the Middle Ages as the "Dark Ages" anymore. But it is true that in the

THE RENAISSANCE

Informative introductions with graphic time lines, Grades 11 and 12, help students put literature in proper historical perspective.

From Adventures in English Literature

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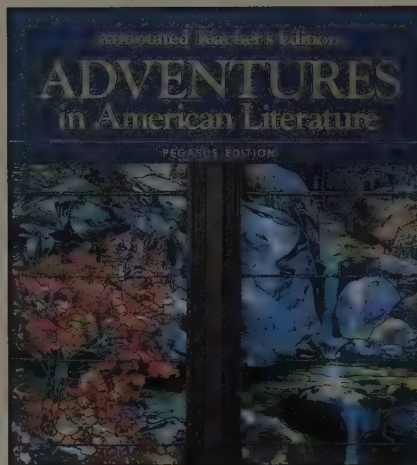
- ☐ A Guide to Literary Terms and Techniques that provides definitions and examples for quick reference
- ☐ Genre introductions that discuss the elements of literature and acquaint students with new literary forms
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# Dynamic teaching and learning resources

## Annotated Teacher's Edition

The *Annotated Teacher's Edition* is all teachers need to present any selection with ease and confidence! It contains unit and selection teaching suggestions and provides—in expanded margins—thousands of annotations that analyze, interpret, draw inferences, highlight literary terms, ask questions about key passages, and show relationships between literature and art. Glossary words are underscored in selections for effective teaching of vocabulary in context. The *Annotated Teacher's Edition* also provides answers to all questions in the student textbook. Cross references conveniently correlate the *Annotated Teacher's Edition* to supplementary materials in the *Teacher's Literature Companion: A ResourceBank*.



### From *Adventures in American Literature*

<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b> Collections of William Stafford's short lyric poetry include <i>Down in My Heart</i> (1947), <i>Traveling Through the Dark</i> (1962), <i>The Record Year</i> (1966), and <i>Stories That Could Be True</i> (1977).</p> <p><b>OBJECTIVES</b> The overall aim is for students to analyze and interpret William Stafford's "Traveling Through the Dark" for a complete list of objectives, see the <i>Teacher's Manual</i>.</p> <p><b>FOCUS: MOTIVATION</b> Have students forewarn, giving opinions on the following statement: "The physical safety of human beings outweighs all other concerns. Allow students to share their thoughts."</p> <p><b>ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING</b> "Traveling Through the Dark" gives a poet's description of a specific incident involving a choice between human life and that of an animal. The poet decides to push the deer into the river.</p> <p><b>DISCUSSION</b> Ask students to identify the elements of William Stafford's poem "Traveling Through the Dark" and comment on these of the poem.</p> <p><b>WRITING</b> Ask students to write a persuasive essay arguing that the speaker in "Traveling Through the Dark" either did or did not make the right decision in sacrificing the life of the fawn.</p> <p><b>TEACHING THE POEM</b> 1. Won National Book Award in 1963 for <i>Traveling Through the Dark</i>. 2. Was instructor at San Jose State College, California.</p> <p><b>Traveling Through the Dark</b> 1. Symbol. Dark is a physical but is also mental—dark of ignorance in which we must grope for answers and for reasons on which to stand. 2. Dead deer on road could cause drivers to swerve into canyon.</p> <p><b>850 MODERN POETRY</b></p>	<p><b>WILLIAM STAFFORD</b></p>  <p>William Stafford was born in Hutchinson, Kansas, and received his B.A. from the University of Kansas. He did graduate work at Iowa State University, and for many years was a professor of literature at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. Stafford worked as the poetry consultant at the Library of Congress. He is a poet much at home in the American Midwest and Far West. Stafford is noted for a plain-spoken and straightforward style. He has commented, "My poetry seems to be direct and communicative, with some oddity and variety. It is usually not formal. It is much like talk, with some enhancement. . . . It delivers a sense of place and event, it has narrative impulses." In addition to poetry, Stafford has written critical essays.</p> <p><b>Traveling Through the Dark</b></p> <p>1. Traveling through the dark I found a deer dead on the edge of the Wilson River road. It is usually best to roll them into the canyon; that road is narrow; to swerve might make more dead.</p> <p>2. By glow of the tail-light I stumbled back of the car and stood by the heap; a doe, a recent killing, she had suffered already, almost cold. I dragged her off; she was large in the belly.</p> <p>3. My fingers touching her side brought me the reason—her side was warm; her fawn lay there waiting, still, still, never to be born. Beside that mountain road I hesitated.</p> <p>4. The car aimed ahead its lowering parking lights; under its hood purred the steady engine.</p> <p>5. I stood in the glare of the warm exhaust turning red; around our group I could hear the wilderness listen.</p> <p>6. I thought hard for us all—my only swerving—then pushed her over the edge into the river.</p> <p>7. and by the assercion that "I thought hard for us all?" b. What does the poet mean when he calls his hand thinking his "only swerving?"</p> <p>8. What does the poem's title imply about our ability to make certain decisions?</p> <p><b>ANALYZING AND INTERPRETING THE POEM</b> 1a. What is the speaker's dilemma? 2a. How is the dilemma made more pointed by the statement that "to swerve might make more dead,"</p> <p>3. No logical, clearly preferable choice can be made here, the choice must be made almost arbitrarily, that is, in "the dark."</p> <p><b>TEACHING THE POEM</b> 1. Most choose between rolling dead deer off narrow road into a canyon, and thus killing unborn fawn in its womb, or letting deer remain on road and thus risking heat of motorist's 2a. Makes decision himself, decision is difficult one. 2b. He only swerved mentally. 3. No logical, clearly preferable choice can be made here, the choice must be made almost arbitrarily, that is, in "the dark."</p> <p><b>TEACHING THE POEM</b> 1. Most choose between rolling dead deer off narrow road into a canyon, and thus killing unborn fawn in its womb, or letting deer remain on road and thus risking heat of motorist's 2a. Makes decision himself, decision is difficult one. 2b. He only swerved mentally. 3. 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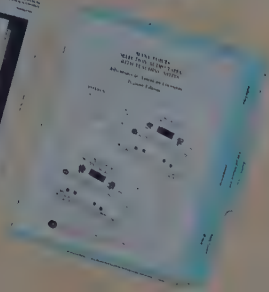
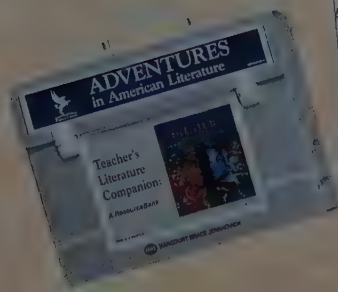
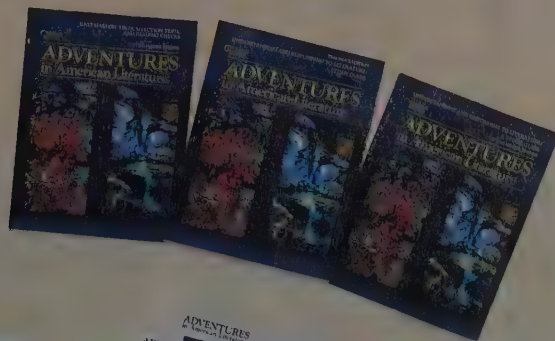
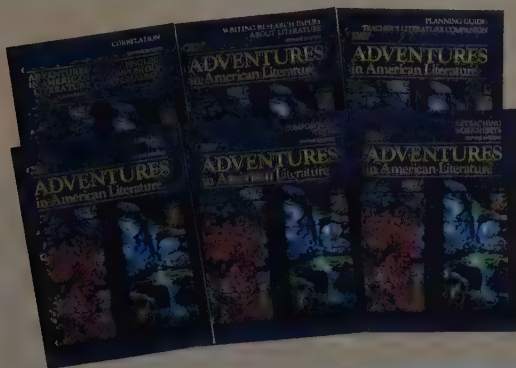
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## Teacher's Literature Companion: A ResourceBank

The *Teacher's Literature Companion* provides a wide variety of resources to enliven literature instruction, provide for individual needs, and monitor progress. Conveniently organized in a portable file case, teaching support includes:

- ☐ Planning Guide: Teacher's Literature Companion
- ☐ Many Voices: Selection Audio Tapes with Teaching Notes
- ☐ Posters for Responding to Literature
- ☐ Transparencies for Responding to Literature
- ☐ *Understanding and Responding to Literature: A Study Guide* (Copying Master Version)
- ☐ *Teacher's Edition, Understanding and Responding to Literature: A Study Guide*
- ☐ Unit Mastery Tests, Selection Tests, and Reading Checks (Copying Master Version)
- ☐ Vocabulary Tests and Vocabulary Development Worksheets
- ☐ Analogy Lessons and Tests
- ☐ Composition Tests and Evaluation Forms
- ☐ Reteaching Worksheets
- ☐ Language Skills for Writing About Literature (worksheets)
- ☐ Correlation: *Adventures in Literature, Pegasus Edition*, and *English Composition and Grammar, Benchmark Edition*
- ☐ Writing Reports About Literature (Grades 7-9)
- ☐ Writing Research Papers About Literature (Grades 10-12)
- ☐ Answer Key to Tests and Worksheets
- ☐ Tabbed File Folders and Selection Labels





# Additional components

## Teacher's Manual

A valuable extra resource, the *Teacher's Manual* provides numerous helpful features:

- ☐ Teaching guides for every selection, with objectives, summaries, and suggestions for motivating students to read
- ☐ Strategies and activities for teaching reading, vocabulary, thinking, writing, and speaking
- ☐ Reteaching strategies and suggestions for adapting instruction to students of varying needs and abilities
- ☐ Suggestions for engaging students in creative exploration of selections, by relating literature to art, music, speaking, and writing
- ☐ Alternative instructional approaches, including cooperative learning activities
- ☐ Guidelines for evaluating writing assignments, including student models and checklists for essay test questions
- ☐ Guides to facilitate teaching major novels for different ability levels
- ☐ Answers to all textbook activities and *Tests*
- ☐ A scope and sequence chart

## Study Guide

For each selection, *Understanding and Responding to Literature: A Study Guide* contains activity worksheets that guide students toward independent reading and understanding of literature.

## Tests

*Unit Mastery Tests, Selection Tests, and Reading Checks* provide a convenient, comprehensive system of assessing student progress.

## Novel Guides

Study worksheets, plans for keeping a reading log, and a list of suggested topics for papers and projects encourage students to think as they read and respond to a novel and extend their reading.

## Software

The *HBJ Idea Organizer for Writing About Literature* is an innovative software program that helps students analyze selections before writing about literature.



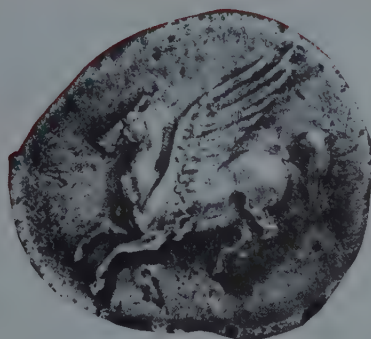


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Dorothy Diemer Hendry  
Formerly Huntsville High School  
Huntsville, Alabama



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# To the Teacher

This **Annotated Teacher's Edition** for ADVENTURES IN READING includes all the Pupil's Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. Each unit of this Annotated Teacher's Edition includes a **Teaching Guide** at the beginning, **Teaching Features** in the top margins of every selection, **Side-Margin Features** and **Annotations** that offer information about the content for all selections, and **Reduced Pupil's Pages** with notations for teachers.

## TEACHING GUIDES

Each unit begins with a Teaching Guide, which includes the following features:

- **Overview of the Unit**—offers information pertaining to the theme, genre, or other element used in grouping the selections into a cohesive unit as well as introductory notes about the selections.
- **Objectives of the Unit**—lists specific student skills addressed in the unit.
- **Concepts and Skills**—lists the literary elements, language and vocabulary exercises, various types of writing activities, and other study activities included in the unit.
- **Teaching Guide Chart**—provides a concise overview of the specific literary elements, reading skills, language and vocabulary exercises, and writing skills addressed in studying each selection.
- **Introducing the Unit**—provides teaching strategies for presenting the selections in the unit.
- **For Reinforcement/Evaluation**—identifies ways that student skills addressed in the unit can be emphasized and assessed.
- **Suggested Teaching Schedule**—proposes a timetable for teaching the unit.

## TEACHING FEATURES

In the top margins of each individual selection, teacher's materials are included that give a preview of the selec-

tion; additional information about the selection, its genre, particular features, or author; and suggestions for concluding study of the selection and evaluating or extending student learning. These features may include:

- **Objectives**—identifies specific student skills to be developed in teaching the selection.
- **Vocabulary**—gives information on in-text vocabulary words and related vocabulary activities and notes special vocabulary activities provided in the Pupil's Edition or the Teacher's Manual.
- **Focus/Motivation**—suggests ideas that may be used to increase student interest and involvement.
- **Presentation**—provides information useful in presenting the selection to students, such as suggested teaching approaches and commentary on specific literary elements in the selection.
- **Motivational Summary**—provides a preview suitable for reading aloud in class to heighten student interest in a selection.
- **Reading Skills Practice**—uses passages identified in the selection to allow students to apply specific reading skills (such as identifying the main idea, drawing logical conclusions, or identifying specific details) and includes suggestions on instructional presentation of the material to students.
- **Closure**—suggests activities to conclude the study of the selection and meet the stated objectives.
- **Extension and Enrichment**—suggests activities to encourage students to extend ideas or skills beyond study of the specific selection to other areas of artistic or literary interest.

## SIDE-MARGIN FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS

In the side margins of each selection appear annotations that give specific, helpful information about material in the Pupil's Edition. These may include:

- **Unit Introduction**—explains the focus of student study materials for the unit.

- **Visual Connections**—gives information about artwork and illustrations; may include information about the artist or the subject of the artwork and may suggest student activities that could be generated using the illustration as a catalyst.
- **Prereading Focus**—suggests ways to lead students into a selection and guide them in their study.
- **Selection Annotations**—provide brief comments similar to lecture notes on specific passages in the selection. These may include explanations on the use of an uncommon term or allusion, an identification or comment on the use of a literary technique by the author, or suggestions for questions that the teacher might ask the class to encourage student involvement (probable student responses are also included). In addition, these annotations may identify a specific passage that can be used to answer a question in the **For Study and Discussion** exercise that follows the selection.
- **Answer Annotations**—provide brief, note-form responses placed for easy reference in the margin beside exercises and questions appearing in the pupil's pages.

## REDUCED PUPIL'S PAGES

An exact, full-color reproduction of each pupil's page appears in this annotated teacher's edition. On these reduced-size pupil's pages, several different types of notations are added for ease of use. These include:

- **Vocabulary Underscores**—provide a quick locator for vocabulary words found in the Glossary.
- **Reference Numbers**—match material on pupil's pages to side annotations for quick referral.
- **Underscored Reading Skills Practice Passages**—identify, with underscores, passages to be used by students in applying a specific reading skill.
- **Reading Skill Identifiers**—explain, in a footnote, the specific reading skill addressed in a Reading Skills Practice.
- **Teacher's Literature Companion Cross-References**—give, as a footnote to the selection, a listing of the materials provided in the Teacher's Literature Companion available with this program.



# TEACHING GUIDE

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## SHORT STORIES

### OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

This unit contains twenty short stories chosen for their literary quality, cultural diversity, and engaging vitality. Included are recognized classics by masters of the genre, such as O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi," Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace," Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado," and James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty"; perennial favorites, such as Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game" and Frank R. Stockton's "The Lady, or the Tiger?"; and stories by distinguished contemporary writers, such as Toni Cade Bambara's "My Delicate Heart Condition," James Hurst's "The Scarlet Ibis," and Heinrich Böll's "The Balek Scales."

At the end of selections throughout the unit are activities that afford students practice in identifying and analyzing literary elements related to plot, character, point of view, setting, and theme. Additional activities are provided to help students improve their language and vocabulary skills. For example, students are asked to investigate the etymology of words, analyze word structure, and determine and use context clues to define words. Students are also given opportunities to respond to the stories through various writing assignments which focus on such elements as characterization, symbolism, irony, setting, and theme. Other activities allow students to practice creative writing skills. Such activities include writing an alternative ending to a story, writing a sequel to a story, and writing a radio play. At the end of the unit, **Developing Skills in Critical Thinking** will help students establish criteria for evaluating stories. Guidelines are offered to show students how to judge the merit of a story's plot, characters, point of view, irony, and theme. **Practice in Reading and Writing**, also at the end of the unit, explains the steps in the process of descriptive and narrative writing. This activity offers examples of and suggestions for both types of writing.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

The aims of the unit are for the student:

- To demonstrate the knowledge of common elements such as character, plot, structure, and theme important to works of fiction and to apply them to selected stories in the unit
- To identify style, point of view, dialogue, and methods of description and narration in fiction selections
- To analyze the tone, intended meaning of symbolism, and the use of irony, allusion, and figurative language in selected short stories
- To solve word problems using analogies and to identify the etymology, denotation, and connotation of selected words
- To classify language into categories such as formal, informal, slang, jargon, dialect, and colloquialisms
- To write analyses of selected short stories
- To write original compositions, stories, and adaptations

### CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The following concepts and skills are treated in this unit:

#### Close Reading of a Short Story

Thinking Model 3  
Analysis 9  
Guidelines for Reading a Short Story 10

#### Literary Elements and Reading Skills

Plot 2, 37, 208  
Characters 2, 208  
Point of View 2, 101, 208  
Setting 2, 208  
Theme 2, 178, 187, 208  
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Suspense 29  
Foreshadowing 29  
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Climax 37  
Resolution 37  
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First-Person Point of View 101  
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Verisimilitude 152  
Literal Language 163  
Figurative Language 163  
Simile 164  
Metaphor 164  
Local Color 172  
Allusion 178  
Implicit Theme 197  
Anachronisms 205

SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
Close Reading of a Short Story 2	Plot 2 Characters 2 Point of View 2 Setting 2 Theme 2		
<i>Plot</i>			
"The Most Dangerous Game" Richard Connell 12	Conflict 29 Suspense and Foreshadowing 29	Finding Meaning from Context 29	Analyzing a Title 30 Writing a Paragraph with Conflict and Suspense 30
"The Lady, or the Tiger?" Frank R. Stockton 31	Plot 37 Irony 37	Distinguishing Meanings 38	Reacting to a Story 38 Writing an Ending to the Story 38
"War" Jack London 39	Irony of Situation 44	Recognizing Word Origins 45	Reacting to Anonymity 45
"The Hound of the Baskinshaws" Sir Arthur Conan Doyle 46	The Story Within a Story 61	Finding Appropriate Meanings 61	Classifying Stories 62
<i>Character</i>			
"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" James Thurber 63	Direct and Indirect Characterization 67 Dramatic Irony 68	Recognizing Jargon 68	Analyzing the Use of Dramatic Irony 68 Writing a Sequel to the Story 69
"All the Years of Her Life" Morley Callaghan 70	Static and Dynamic Characters 74	Recognizing Informal Language in Dialogue 74	Evaluating Characterization 74 Creating a Dominant Impression 75
"Split Cherry Tree" Jesse Stuart 76	Complex Characterization 86	Identifying Levels of Language 86	Discussing Central Ideas 87 Exploring a Character's Nature 87
"A Mother in Mannville" Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings 88		Recognizing Related Words 94	Analyzing Methods of Characterization 94
<i>Point of View</i>			
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"My Delicate Heart Condition" Toni Cade Bambara 104		Recognizing Characteristics of Speech 110	Describing a Scene 111
"Before the End of Summer" Grant Moss, Jr. 112	Limited Third-Person Point of View 124		Tracing a Character's Thoughts and Feelings 124
"The Pacing Goose" Jessamyn West 125	The Omniscient Point of View 137	Understanding Dialect 137	Discussing a Change in Attitude 137 Describing a Season 138
<i>Setting</i>			
"The Portable Phonograph" Walter Van Tilburg Clark 139	Setting 144	Distinguishing Denotative from Connotative Meanings 145	Discussing the Role of Setting 145

SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
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"The Scarlet Ibis" James Hurst 154	Figurative Language 163	Finding Meaning from Context 164	Analyzing the Function of Setting 165 Using Specific Details in Setting 165
"Mana Seda" Fray Angelico Chavez 166	Local Color 172	Finding Meanings of Place Names 172	Responding to an Interpretation 172
<i>Theme</i>			
"The Gift of the Magi" O. Henry 173	Theme 178 Allusions 178	Learning About Word Histories 179	Evaluating a Story 179 Writing a Story with a Theme 180
"The Balek Scales" Heinrich Böll 181	Expressing a Theme 187	Using Context Clues 188	Discussing a Symbol 188 Writing a Sentence That Builds to a Climax 188
"The Necklace" Guy de Maupassant 190	Implicit Theme 197	Using Words with Exactness 197	Comparing Themes 197 Writing a Sequel 197
"The Fifty-First Dragon" Heywood Broun 199		Recognizing Analogies 206	Explaining Levels of Meaning 207 Recasting the Story 207
<i>Developing Skills in Critical Thinking</i> 208 <i>Practice in Reading and Writing</i> 209	Establishing Criteria for Evaluation 208		Descriptive Writing 209 Narrative Writing 210 Writing Dialogue 211

## Language and Vocabulary Skills

Finding Meaning from Context 29  
 Distinguishing Meanings 38  
 Recognizing Word Origins 45  
 Finding Appropriate Meanings 61  
 Recognizing Jargon 68  
 Recognizing Informal Language in Dialogue 74  
 Identifying Levels of Language 86  
 Recognizing Related Words 94  
 Analyzing Word Structure 102  
 Recognizing Characteristics of Speech 110  
 Understanding Dialect 137  
 Distinguishing Denotative from Connotative Meanings 145  
 Distinguishing Informal Standard English from Slang 152  
 Finding Meaning from Context 164  
 Finding Meanings of Place Names 172  
 Learning About Word Histories 179  
 Using Context Clues 188  
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## Writing About Literature

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 Reacting to a Story 38  
 Reacting to Anonymity 45  
 Classifying Stories 62  
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 Analyzing the Narrator 102  
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## Other Types of Writing

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Creating a Dominant Impression	75
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Describing a Scene	111
Describing a Season	138
Using Specific Details in Setting	165
Writing a Story with a Theme	180
Writing a Sentence That Builds to a Climax	188
Writing a Sequel	197
Recasting the Story	207

## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Establishing Criteria for Evaluation	208
--------------------------------------	-----

## Practice in Reading and Writing

The Writing Process	209
Descriptive Writing	209
Narrative Writing	210
Writing Dialogue	211

## INTRODUCING THE UNIT

Your students have been hearing, viewing, and telling stories ever since they were old enough to put words together. They probably have memories of bedtime stories, tall tales, and family anecdotes, as well as newspaper comics and children's television shows. Perhaps they remember gathering around a favorite teacher or librarian for the pleasures of story time, or they might remember the joy they felt in learning to read stories for themselves.

You may have already checked students' reading skills, interests, and expectations through pretests, inventories, and informal discussions. Consider these questions: What do the students already know about reading stories? What is next in their development of reading skills and comprehension? What are the connections between their lives and interests and the stories in *Adventures in Reading*? How can they be engaged in active reading and honest response? How can they be motivated, evaluated, and rewarded for reading progress? How can attitudes and habits conducive to a lifetime of good reading be formed? These are the questions to answer in your planning for this unit.

In addition to the activities that accompany each selection, students might be interested in completing one or more of the following projects as they study the unit:

1. Students might adapt selections in their textbook for oral presentation. They could tell stories to the rest of the class or to children in lower grades. Richard Connell's "The Most Dangerous Game" would be a good choice for mature audiences, and O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi" would appeal to young children. If some students prefer writing their own tales for storytelling, you might refer them to *Writing for Young Children* by Claudia Lewis (Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday,

1981). This source will provide helpful information about writing stories for young people. Since storytelling involves oral interpretation, encourage students to rehearse.

2. A small group of students might present a story, such as Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado," as a radio drama. Although there are only two speaking parts in this story, two or three other students might be responsible for sound effects and background music appropriate to the story's atmosphere.
3. You may want to encourage students who enjoy writing short stories to submit their original works to real publications, such as local newspapers and youth-oriented magazines. An annually updated reference book, *Writer's Market*, contains detailed information about the readership and submission requirements for a wide range of publications in the U.S.
4. Students often enjoy creating crossword puzzles, anagrams, and analogies that involve literary vocabulary, concepts, and facts from a particular author's works or background. Students can develop word games individually or in small groups, can exchange games and work out each other's puzzles, or can have team competitions for the entire class.
5. Some students might enjoy writing epilogues for a story. Although students might try to imitate the author's style, the point is to imagine what happens next. Occasionally, students will dislike a story's ending. In these instances, allow students to write more personally satisfying conclusions. Students can share their writing, comparing their versions of the characters' continuing lives or the new endings they develop.

## FOR REINFORCEMENT / EVALUATION

The **Closure** feature in this unit provides suggestions for reinforcing and concluding classroom instruction. In addition to the **Reading Check** feature in the textbook, a *Study Guide* worksheet and a test for each selection or group of selections in the unit are available in the *Teacher's Literature Companion*.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING SCHEDULE

The selections in this unit may be successfully taught in approximately twenty days. In addition, you may want to schedule one day for the introduction of the unit, two days for evaluation, and one or two days for **Developing Skills in Critical Thinking** and **Practice in Reading and Writing** at the end of the unit.

## USING THE FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS

This unit contains all Pupil's Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. The top margins contain teaching strategies to be used for in-class reference and for planning lessons. The side margins offer information related directly to the text that appears on the reduced pages. These side-margin annotations are designed primarily to be used after students have read the literary selections and can therefore serve as in-class lecture notes.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Claude Monet was born in Paris and decided early in life to become a landscape painter. He took up the then uncommon practice of painting outdoors and even had a special "studio-boat" constructed, in which he would work amidst the constantly changing reflections of a river or lake. One of Monet's paintings called *Impression: Sunrise* created a sensation in Paris art circles with its interpretive depiction of how the sunrise affected the artist. The group of Parisian artists who painted in this style became known as "Impressionists."

### About the Artwork

Although the Impressionists are now considered great artists and their works sell for millions of dollars, they were not particularly popular or well-paid during their own era. The Impressionists' radical stylistic innovations—which included experiments with color, light, and subject matter—were shocking to people of the day. The costly and time-consuming art of portrait painting (which had long been a steady source of income for a wide variety of painters) could not compete with the efficient realism of the newly invented camera. Partly because of the camera's exactness, Impressionists chose another direction, offering bold interpretations of the world as they saw it.

### Relating Expression Skills

Students might research the paintings of one of the Impressionists and then attempt to portray an everyday object or series of objects in an "impressionistic" manner. Students might also consider how Impressionism, as an artistic movement, can be applied to literature. Tell them that there are writers who use an impressionistic style in their writing.





## SHORT STORIES

### SHORT STORIES

A short story almost always deals with **conflict**. Authors create characters who must overcome some problem or obstacle. By empathizing with the struggles the main character has to undergo, the reader is drawn into the story. This principle of empathy—feeling the experiences and challenges of the main character(s)—is the basis for much of the joy of reading. Literature can momentarily take us away from the problems we face and allow us to identify with those of other individuals in other places and at other times. Conflicts in literature will be resolved in many different ways, some happily, some tragically. However, no matter whether a story has a happy ending or not, a sign of good literature is that the shared experience is interesting and engaging.

*Madame Monet on the Couch* by Claude Monet (1840–1926). Oil on canvas.  
Musée D'Orsay

\*For additional teaching materials related to this unit, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Mastery Tests 1 and 2 / Analogy Tests 1, 2, and 3 / Reteaching Worksheets 1 and 2



## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to speculate on what is meant by the terms *literal reading*, *inferential reading*, and *critical reading* when referring to levels of reading proficiency. (They might want to look up key words in a dictionary.)

## CLOSE READING OF A SHORT STORY

1

Often plot can be neatly divided into four parts: **exposition**, **conflict**, **climax**, and **resolution**.

2

Limited-omniscient narrator tells what only one character thinks and feels and merely observes other characters.

3

In some stories, knowing time and place is crucial to understanding events because events are related to cultural beliefs of specific times and places.

4

Most important themes in literature transcend boundaries of time and place.

## PRESENTATION

The **Close Reading** feature focuses on developing the special abilities and skills that are needed in approaching short stories. The annotations in the margin present students with a model of the thinking skills that an experienced reader prac-

tices when reading a short story. These side notes treat the elements of **setting**, **characterization**, **plot**, and **theme** and provide a basis for comprehensive analysis. Advise students to begin by reading the short story "The Eclipse" all the way through, ignoring all side notes for the

1

It is customary to begin the study of short stories with the element of *plot*. Plot is the organized pattern of events in a story. Sometimes the plot is relatively simple and straightforward, as in "The Most Dangerous Game." Sometimes the plot is more complicated; there may be more than one action to follow. Occasionally, a plot is structured to lead to an ingenious surprise at the end, such as the famous surprise ending of "The Gift of the Magi."

In some stories, plot is the most important element. Readers keep reading to find out what will happen next. But in most stories, the *characters* are of primary importance. Generally, a story focuses on a main character. Although Jess and Enoch and even Samantha, the goose, are fully depicted in "The Pacing Goose," it is Eliza who is at the center of the action.

Another element is *point of view*. Point of view is like the camera in a movie, the lens through which you, the reader, view the action. "The Cask of Amontillado" is told from a first-person point of view, by the central character in the story. Other stories are told from the third-person point of view, as if the action were seen by an objective observer who merely records what happens. Still other stories are told by an omniscient (all-knowing) narrator, who tells not only what happens but what the characters think and feel.

2

3

Just as every story has a point of view, so every story has a *setting*, the time and place of the action. Some settings are strange and exotic, such as Ship-Trap Island in "The Most Dangerous Game." Some settings are familiar and ordinary, such as the neighborhood in "A Summer's Reading."

4

Finally, many short stories do more than excite or amuse. They also express a *theme*, an idea about life. Occasionally, a theme is expressed directly through the author's comments, but generally theme is not directly stated—it must be inferred from other elements in the story.

## CLOSE READING OF A SHORT STORY

### Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

A reader who enters imaginatively into a short story reacts to the interplay of such elements as plot, character, setting, point of view, and theme. The better you, as an individual reader, understand how these elements work together, the better you will understand and appreciate the author's intent and meaning.

time being. After students have completed this assignment, request that they read the story once again, this time studying the notes under the heading **Thinking Model**. Emphasize to students that these notes reflect what an experienced reader might think about in working

through a story. Explain that through their study of short stories, they will learn how to approach their reading in a similar manner.

- 5 Here is a brief story that has been read carefully by an experienced reader. The notes in the margin show how this reader thinks in working through a story. Read the story at least twice before proceeding to the analysis on page 9. You may wish to make notes of your own on a separate sheet of paper.

## The Eclipse

SELMA LAGERLÖF

Translated by Velma Swanston Howard

- 6 There were Stina of Ridgécôte and Lina of Birdsong and Kajsa of Littlemarsh and Maja of Skypeak and Beda of Finn-darkness and Elin, the new wife on the old soldier's place, and two or three other peasant women besides—all of them lived at the far end of the parish, below Storhøjden, in a region so wild and rocky none of the big farm owners had bothered to lay hands on it.

- 7 One had her cabin set up on a shelf of rock, another had hers put up at the edge of a bog, while a third one that stood at the crest of a hill so steep it was a toilsome climb getting to it. If by chance any of the others had a cottage built on more favorable ground, you may be sure it lay so close to the mountain as to shut out the sun from autumn fair time clear up to Annunciation Day.<sup>1</sup>

- 8 They each cultivated a little potato patch close by the cabin, though under serious difficulties. To be sure, there were many kinds of soil there at the foot of the mountain, but it was hard work to make the patches of land yield anything. In some places they had to clear away so much stone from their fields, it

1. **Annunciation Day:** March 25, the day commemorating the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Mary (Luke 1:26-38).

### Thinking Model

*The opening paragraph identifies the characters and the setting—a wild and rocky region in Sweden.*

*Details emphasize the harshness of the land where the women live and their isolation.*

*Mountain blocks out the sunlight for six months of the year.*

*Details illustrate the struggle to wrest a meager living out of the poor soil.*

- 5 The human mind constantly abstracts information from a story, relating it to personal knowledge and experience.

- 6 Unless reader is familiar with Swedish names, this is first clue that names are women's names.

- 7 **Setting.** Description is emphasized by placement at end of introductory paragraph; suggests that information about setting will be important to story.

- 8 Sun is lower in sky in winter months.

- 9 Details suggest that hard life of women will be important.

**10**  
**Conflict.** Struggle involves humans against nature.

**11**  
Loneliness is identified as a complication in the story.

**12**  
**Exposition.** Additional information about women's life style is given, including reasons for social gatherings.

**13**  
Necessary preparation is described.

**10**  
would have built a cow-house on a manorial estate;<sup>2</sup> in some they had dug ditches as deep as graves, and in others they had brought their earth in sacks and spread it on the bare rocks. Where the soil was not so poor, they were forever fighting the tough thistle and pigweed which sprang up in such profusion you would have thought the whole potato land had been prepared for their benefit.

All the livelong day the women were alone in their cabins; for even where one had a husband and children, the man went off to his work every morning and the children went to school. A few among the older women had grown sons and daughters, but they had gone to America. And some there were with little children, who were always around, of course; but these could hardly be regarded as company.

**11**  
Being so much alone, it was really necessary that they should meet sometimes over the coffee cups. Not that they got on so very well together, nor had any great love for each other; but some liked to keep posted on what the others were doing, and some grew despondent living like that, in the shadow of the mountain, unless they met people now and then. And there were those, too, who needed to unburden their hearts, and talk about the last letter from America, and those who were naturally talkative and jocular,<sup>3</sup> and who longed for opportunity to make use of these happy God-given talents.

**12**  
Nor was it any trouble at all to prepare for a little party. Coffeepot and coffee cups they all had of course, and cream could be got at the manor, if one had no cow of one's own

*Nature is presented as inhospitable—an adversary against which these women must struggle constantly.*

*Besides the difficulty of struggling with the land, the women are faced with the problem of loneliness.*

*The need for companionship brings the women together to share news, to discuss problems, and to be sociable.*

*The women have devised a coffee party as a little ceremony to ease their loneliness.*

2. **manorial** (mă-nôr'ē-əl) **estate:** The manor was the main house or mansion located on a large, landed estate.

3. **jocular** (jök'yə-lər): given to joking.



to milk; fancy biscuits and small cakes one could, at a pinch, get the dairyman's driver to fetch from the municipal<sup>4</sup> bakery, and country merchants who sold coffee and sugar were to be found everywhere. So, to get up a coffee party was the easiest thing imaginable. The difficulty lay in finding an occasion.

For Stina of Ridgecôte, Lina of Birdsong, Kajsa of Littlemarsh, Maja of Skypeak, Beda of Finn-darkness, and Elin, the new wife at the old soldier's, were all agreed that it would never do for them to celebrate in the midst of the common everyday life. Were they to be that wasteful of the precious hours which never return, they might get a bad name. And to hold coffee parties on Sundays or great Holy Days was out of the question; for then the married women had husband and children at home, which was quite company enough. As for the rest—some liked to attend church, some wished to visit relatives, while a few preferred to spend the day at home, in perfect peace and stillness, that they might really feel it was a Holy Day.

Therefore they were all the more eager to take advantage of every possible opportunity. Most of them gave parties on their name days,<sup>5</sup> though some celebrated the great event when the wee little one cut its first tooth, or when it took its first steps. For those who received money-letters from America, that was always a convenient excuse, and it was also in order to invite all the women of the neighborhood to come and help tack a quilt or stretch a web just off the loom.

All the same, there were not nearly as

*Quality of life is simple and abstemious. There are few pleasures.*

14

Traditional values of rural Sweden are important to story. Since precious time must not be wasted, celebrations cannot be held unless adequate social reason is found.

15

Reader infers socialization is rare pleasure.

16

**Characterization.** Women are eager to enjoy celebrations but have few occasions; have to search for reasons to have parties.

4. **municipal** (myōō-nīs'ə-pəl): city.

5. **name days:** The name day is the feast day of the saint after whom a person is named or the day of baptism.

17

Major problem for protagonist is to find reason to celebrate.

18

Beda was named for the Venerable Bede, or St. Bede. Once believed to be the most learned saint and scholar of his day (673–735), he was later removed from the church calendar and declared to be a legend, not a real person. Beda cannot celebrate her name day anymore because Bede is no longer considered a saint.

19

**Suspense.** Story focuses on Beda's attempt to find reason to celebrate; reader wonders if she will succeed.

20

She realizes that an eclipse is certainly a noteworthy event.

21

Beda realizes that, although noteworthy, it may seem odd to celebrate an eclipse.

17

many occasions to meet as were needed. One year one of the women was at her wits' end. It was her turn to give a party, and she had no objection to carrying out what was expected of her; but she could not seem to hit upon anything to celebrate. Her own name day she could not celebrate, being named Beda, as Beda had been stricken out of the almanac. Nor could she celebrate that of any member of her family, for all her dear ones were resting in the churchyard. She was very old, and the quilt she slept under would probably outlast her. She had a cat of which she was very fond. Truth to tell, it drank coffee just as well as she did; but she could hardly bring herself to hold a party for a cat!

18

19

Pondering, she searched her almanac again and again, for there she felt she must surely find the solution of her problem.

She began at the beginning, with "The Royal House" and "Signs and Forecasts," and read on, right through to "Markets and Postal Transmittances for 1912," without finding anything.

20

As she was reading the book for the seventh time, her glance rested on "Eclipses." She noted that that year, which was the year of our Lord nineteen-hundred twelve, on April seventeenth there would be a solar eclipse. It would begin at twenty minutes past high noon and end at 2:40 o'clock, and would cover nine-tenths of the sun's disk.

This she had read before, many times, without attaching any significance to it; but now, all at once, it became dazzlingly clear to her.

21

"Now I have it!" she exclaimed.

But it was only for a second or two that she felt confident; and then she put the thought away, fearing that the other women would just laugh at her.

The next few days, however, the idea that

*Author focuses on the problem of her protagonist.*

22 had come to her when reading her almanac kept recurring to her mind, until at last she began to wonder whether she hadn't better venture.<sup>6</sup> For when she thought about it, what friend had she in all the world she loved better than the Sun? Where her hut lay not a ray of sunlight penetrated her room the whole winter long. She counted the days until the Sun would come back to her in the spring. The Sun was the only one she longed for, the one who was always friendly and gracious to her and of whom she could never see enough.

23 She looked her years, and felt them, too. Her hands shook as if she were in a perpetual chill and when she saw herself in the looking glass, she appeared so pale and washed out, as if she had been lying out to bleach. It was only when she stood in a strong, warm, down-pouring sunshine that she felt like a live human being and not a walking corpse.

24 The more she thought about it, the more she felt there was no day in the whole year she would rather celebrate than the one when her friend the Sun battled against darkness, and after a glorious conquest, came forth with new splendor and majesty.

25 The seventeenth of April was not far away, but there was ample time to make ready for a party. So, on the day of the eclipse Stina, Lina, Kajsa, Maja, and the other women all sat drinking coffee with Beda at Finn-darkness. They drank their second and third cups, and chatted about everything imaginable. For one thing, they said they couldn't for the life of them understand why Beda should be giving a party.

*Beda hesitates, then decides to hold the party on the day of the eclipse.*

*The benevolence of the sun is contrasted with the harshness of the terrain and the drabness of lives.*

*Beda's age and fragility are emphasized.*

22

Sun is especially important to people who experience long periods of darkness.

23

**Characterization.** Details emphasize Beda's frailty and add poignancy as reader realizes that Beda may not live much longer.

24

**Symbol.** Sun's ability to do battle against darkness is symbolic of struggles of life in harsh environment.

25

Beda has not told reason for the party, building suspense for reader.

6. **venture** (vēn'chər): dare, take a chance, or risk something.



26

**Allusion.** Eclipse reminds women for a moment of events foretold about Judgment Day, the end of the world. Awesomeness of eclipse heightens incongruity of women's reaction.

27

**Climax.** Beda's song is moment of greatest emotional intensity.

28

Sun becomes **symbol** of hope as Beda stands in sun's light.

29

Beda reveals reason for celebration; story's **resolution** begins.

26

Meanwhile, the eclipse was under way. But they took little notice of it. Only for a moment, when the sky turned blackish gray, when all nature seemed under a leaden pall,<sup>7</sup> and there came driving a howling wind with sounds as of the Trumpet of Doom and the lamentations of Judgment Day<sup>8</sup>—only then did they pause and feel a bit awed. But here they each had a fresh cup of coffee, and the feeling soon passed.

27

When all was over, and the Sun stood out in the heavens so beamingly happy—it seemed to them it had not shone with such brilliancy and power the whole year—they saw old Beda go over to the window, and stand with folded hands. Looking out toward the sunlit slope, she sang in her quavering<sup>9</sup> voice:

Thy shining sun goes up again,  
I thank Thee, O my Lord!  
With new-found courage, strength and  
hope,  
I raise a song of joy.

*Beda feels that the sun is a gift from God, renewing one's sources of courage, strength, and joy.*

28

Thin and transparent, old Beda stood there in the light of the window, and as she sang the sunbeams danced about her, as if wanting to give her, also, of their life and strength and color.

29

When she had finished the old hymn—verse she turned and looked at her guests, as if in apology.

"You see," she said, "I haven't any better friend than the Sun, and I wanted to give her a party on the day of her eclipse. I felt that we should come together to greet her, when she came out of her darkness."

7. **leaden pall**: gloomy atmosphere. A *pall* is a dark covering.

8. **Trumpet . . . Day**: the day of God's final judgment; doomsday.

9. **quavering**: trembling.

Now they understood what old Beda meant, and their hearts were touched. They began to speak well of the Sun. "She was kind to rich and poor alike, and when she came peeping into the hut on a winter's day, she was as comforting as a glowing fire on the hearth. Just the sight of her smiling face made life worth living, whatever the troubles one had to bear."

30 The women went back to their homes after the party, happy and content. They somehow felt richer and more secure in the thought that they had a good, faithful friend in the Sun.

*Beda's hymn of joy awakens similar feelings in the other women, who recognize the importance of the sun in their lives.*

## Analysis

31 "The Eclipse" is a story that presents nature in both its hostile and be-  
32 nevolent aspects. The events of the story suggest that those who are most dependent upon the natural world and who experience its greatest deprivations may also experience its greatest joys.

33 The opening paragraphs of the story identify the characters and the setting—a wild and rocky region in Sweden, where the women try to wrest a meager harvest out of the land. In this region, which is overshadowed by a mountain, the soil is so poor that none of the big farm owners have tried to cultivate it. The cottages are built on rocky shelves or at the edge of marshes. The land is so rocky that the inhabitants can grow only a few potatoes. They have no modern conveniences and have to carry earth in sacks and spread soil on the rocks.

34 Besides the difficulty of maintaining a meager existence, the women are faced with the problem of isolation and loneliness. The quality of life is abstemious. Pleasures are few. To ease their loneliness, they have devised the ceremony of the coffee party, which allows them to share news, discuss problems, and enjoy one another's companionship.

35 Having established the background and situation to make the central action of the story intelligible, Lagerlöf introduces the dilemma of the protagonist, Beda. It is her turn to give a coffee party, but she can think of no proper occasion. In looking through her almanac, she finds that there is to be a solar eclipse, and she decides to hold a party

30

**Resolution.** Two conflicts have been resolved. Women find companionship as well as valuable ally in struggle with harsh environment.

31

Story's central conflict is humans versus nature.

32

Statement of theme, or central idea, of story.

33

Harsh environment contributes to the women's hard lives.

34

Women's loneliness is an additional complication in their lives.

35

Protagonist's central problem is to think of a reason to celebrate.

36

Details about **plot** in order of appearance in story.

37

Consideration of Lagerlöf's attitude toward story's characters.

#### READING A SHORT STORY

1. As we read about the Swedish women, we begin to empathize with their loneliness and wonder how we ourselves might respond in such a situation. We learn the reasons for the women's relationships with each other and with nature.

2. Students can prepare for class discussion and can help their reading comprehension by looking up unfamiliar words as they read.

3. In many stories, background information is important to understanding the plot. **Exposition**, as in "The Eclipse," may include information about **setting** and life style of the main characters.

36

to honor the sun. Accustomed to long, dark winters, Beda considers the sun a friend, a source of renewal: "It was only when she stood in a strong, warm, down-pouring sunshine that she felt like a live human being and not a walking corpse."

On the day of Beda's coffee party, the women are awed by the dramatic darkening of the skies while the eclipse is in progress. When the eclipse is over and the sun appears in radiant splendor, Beda sings a hymn of thanks to God. This song is the climax of the story. Beda feels that the sun is a gift from God, renewing one's sources of courage, strength, and joy.

37

It is clear that Lagerlöf's sympathies lie with good, simple folk like Beda, who accept the hardships of their lives and who triumph over their difficulties with unwavering and touching faith. The other women, moved by Beda's words, share her feelings that the sun gives them "life and strength and color." They return to their homes feeling "richer and more secure in the thought that they had a good, faithful friend in the Sun."

This analysis of "The Eclipse" is more than a summary of the events in the story. It takes into account the various elements of the story, making apparent the interconnection of setting, characters, events, and theme. This reader has arrived at an interpretation of Lagerlöf's story by actively questioning the author's purpose. The commentary takes into consideration the significant details of description and action, and it focuses on the "point" of the story—its overall meaning or theme.

With practice you can develop skill in reading and analyzing a literary work. Here are some guidelines to follow for close reading of a short story.

#### Guidelines for Reading a Short Story

1. *Read for both pleasure and insight.* Short stories provide us with entertainment, and they can also provide us with greater understanding of ourselves and others. Keep both objects in mind as you read.

2. *Look up unfamiliar words and references.* If you cannot get the meaning of a word from context clues, be sure to consult a standard dictionary or other reference work.

3. *As you read, ask yourself what is happening in the story.* In "The Eclipse," the *exposition*—the background of the story—is presented in the first eight paragraphs. The central action has to do with Beda's problem and the solution she finds to it.



4. *Look for clues that tell you what the setting is.* Lagerlöf gives a detailed description of the region and the customs of its inhabitants.
5. *Draw conclusions about the characters from both direct and indirect evidence.* Lagerlöf does not tell us directly that Beda is devout. Through her actions and words we learn that she is deeply religious.
6. *Decide from which point of view the story is told.* In some stories the narrator is a character who takes part in the action. In other stories, such as “The Eclipse,” the storyteller is an outside observer.
7. *Actively question the author’s purpose and method.* Lagerlöf has a purpose for emphasizing the setting. Nature is so significant a presence that it functions almost as a character in the story.
8. *Probe for the central idea or theme—the underlying meaning of the work.* Lagerlöf’s story suggests that people who live in harmony with the natural world accept its difficulties as well as its blessings. In reading a story, ask what it shows about human nature.

4. Details about region and customs are important in this story because they help us understand the importance the women attach to human companionship.
5. The author directly describes Beda’s physical appearance as an old woman; information about her beliefs is presented indirectly.
6. In this story, the third-person **narrator** is omniscient—knows the thoughts and feelings of the characters.
7. The author gives careful details about both the hostile and the benevolent aspects of nature.
8. The story reveals that humans may find joy in such a simple thing as the shining of the sun, an occurrence often taken for granted.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify and analyze the story's **plot** and differentiate between **internal** and **external conflict**. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes **plot** and **suspense**. You may want to discuss how the unfolding series of events that make up a **plot** creates **suspense**. Note that word choice in itself can create suspense, as students will find in the opening scene.

## The Most Dangerous Game

After students have read the short story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **plot** elements, including **conflict**, **foreshadowing**, and **suspense**.

1

**Suspense.** Connell creates suspense in first lines with word choice: "mystery," "suggestive," "dread," and "superstition."

2

**Imagery.** Tactile imagery throughout story creates vivid impressions; here "pressed its thick warm blackness" intensifies atmosphere.

3

**Reputation** of Rainsford as master hunter is established early in story.

4

*What do these lines imply about their destination?* Sailing toward South America to go on expedition to hunt large cats.

5

**Foreshadowing.** Comment foreshadows rest of story: Rainsford, the unfeeling hunter, will become the hunted.

6

Rainsford and Whitney disagree on animals' understanding.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 29 will give students practice in finding meaning from context and in analyzing the use of the word *game* in the title.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to define the word *game* in two ways that a hunter might use it. In each sense, how could the game be "most dangerous"? Ask students to find out why the island seems to "broadcast vibrations of evil."

## PLOT

# The Most Dangerous Game

RICHARD CONNELL

*From the time of its publication, in 1924, this story has been greatly admired for its original plot and skillful use of suspense. As you read, try to determine what meaning the title has. Does it have more than one meaning?*

"Off there to the right—somewhere—is a large 4 island," said Whitney. "It's rather a mystery—"

"What island is it?" Rainsford asked.

"The old charts call it 'Ship-Trap Island,'" Whitney replied. "A suggestive name, isn't it? Sailors have a curious dread of the place. I don't know why. Some superstition—"

"Can't see it," remarked Rainsford, trying to peer through the dank tropical night that was 2 palpable as it pressed its thick warm blackness in upon the yacht.

"You've good eyes," said Whitney, with a 3 laugh, "and I've seen you pick off a moose moving in the brown fall bush at four hundred yards, but even you can't see four miles or so through a moonless Caribbean night."

"Nor four yards," admitted Rainsford. "Ugh! It's like moist black velvet."

"It will be light in Rio," promised Whitney. "We should make it in a few days. I hope the jaguar guns have come from Purdey's.<sup>1</sup> We should have some good hunting up the Amazon. Great sport, hunting."

"The best sport in the world," agreed Rainsford.

"For the hunter," amended Whitney. "Not for the jaguar."

"Don't talk rot, Whitney," said Rainsford. "You're a big-game hunter, not a philosopher."

5 Who cares how a jaguar feels?"

"Perhaps the jaguar does," observed Whitney.

6 "Bah! They've no understanding."

"Even so, I rather think they understand one

1. **Purdey:** a famous English manufacturer of hunting rifles and shotguns.

\*For additional teaching materials related to plot, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Composition Test 1*

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

On a moonless night in the tropics, famous wild-game hunter Sanger Rainsford stands on the deck of his yacht. He stares off into the gloomy darkness, wondering about the island that he knows is there—mysterious Ship-Trap Island.

There is some mystery, something frightening, associated with that island. He thinks he hears a noise. Rainsford leaps onto the rail to hear better; then he loses his balance and falls overboard!

## PRESENTATION

After mentioning that this story has been dramatized in movies and on television, challenge students to visualize it in their own minds as they read. One way to present this story effectively is by reading aloud the first page or two yourself.

thing—fear. The fear of pain and the fear of death.”

“Nonsense,” laughed Rainsford. “This hot weather is making you soft, Whitney. Be a realist. The world is made up of two classes—the hunters and the huntees. Luckily, you and I are hunters. Do you think we’ve passed that island yet?”

“I can’t tell in the dark. I hope so.”

“Why?” asked Rainsford.

“The place has a reputation—a bad one.”

7 “Cannibals?” suggested Rainsford.

“Hardly. Even cannibals wouldn’t live in such a Godforsaken place. But it’s gotten into sailor lore, somehow. Didn’t you notice that the crew’s nerves seemed a bit jumpy today?”

“They were a bit strange, now you mention it. Even Captain Nielsen—”

“Yes, even that tough-minded old Swede, who’d go up to the devil himself and ask him for a light. Those fishy blue eyes held a look I never saw there before. All I could get out of him was: ‘This place has an evil name among seafaring men, sir.’ Then he said to me, very

8 gravely: ‘Don’t you feel anything?’—as if the air about us was actually poisonous. Now, you mustn’t laugh when I tell you this—I did feel something like a sudden chill.

“There was no breeze. The sea was as flat as a plate-glass window. We were drawing near the island then. What I felt was a—a mental chill; a sort of sudden dread.”

“Pure imagination,” said Rainsford. “One superstitious sailor can taint the whole ship’s company with his fear.”

“Maybe. But sometimes I think sailors have an extra sense that tells them when they are in danger. Sometimes I think evil is a tangible thing—with wavelengths, just as sound and light have. An evil place can, so to speak, broadcast vibrations of evil. Anyhow, I’m glad we were getting out of this zone. Well, I think I’ll turn in now, Rainsford.”

“I’m not sleepy,” said Rainsford. “I’m going to smoke another pipe up on the afterdeck.”

“Good night, then, Rainsford. See you at breakfast.”

“Right. Good night, Whitney.”

There was no sound in the night as Rainsford sat there, but the muffled throb of the engine that drove the yacht swiftly through the darkness, and the swish and ripple of the wash of the propeller.

Rainsford, reclining in a steamer chair, indolently puffed on his favorite brier. The sensuous drowsiness of the night was on him. “It’s so dark,” he thought, “that I could sleep without closing my eyes; the night would be my eyelids—”

9 An abrupt sound startled him. Off to the right he heard it, and his ears, expert in such matters, could not be mistaken. Again he heard the sound, and again. Somewhere, off in the blackness, someone had fired a gun three times.

Rainsford sprang up and moved quickly to the rail, mystified. He strained his eyes in the direction from which the reports had come, but it was like trying to see through a blanket. He leaped upon the rail and balanced himself there, to get greater elevation; his pipe, striking a rope, was knocked from his mouth. He lunged for it; a short, hoarse cry came from his lips as he realized he had reached too far and had lost his balance. The cry was pinched off

10 short as the blood-warm waters of the Caribbean Sea closed over his head.

11 He struggled up to the surface and tried to cry out, but the wash from the speeding yacht slapped him in the face and the salt water in his open mouth made him gag and strangle. Desperately he struck out with strong strokes after the receding lights of the yacht, but he stopped before he had swum fifty feet. A cer-

7

**Foreshadowing.** Reference to cannibals foreshadows events on island. Although Zaroff does not eat his victims, he does hunt and kill humans.

8

**Suspense.** Connell creates suspense by suggesting that evil can actually be sensed.

9

Reader must infer what “such matters” are. However, since Rainsford is expert on matters of hunting, it comes as no surprise to find that shots have been fired.

10

**Imagery.** Tactile image of “blood-warm waters” suggests danger.

11

**Conflict.** Rainsford presented in external conflict as he struggles against sea.



Break off your reading in a suspenseful passage and let students continue with silent reading. If they have read a few more pages by the end of the class period, they will surely want to complete the story at the earliest opportunity.

Since the textbook includes an abundance of

questions on **conflict, suspense, foreshadowing**, and other elements of the story, you can select enough questions to guide a lively and productive discussion. Try to give every student opportunity to respond. One good technique is to assign each of your chosen questions to sev-

eral students, directing them to write an answer in complete sentences. After a few minutes, each student should have something to say when he or she is called on. Encourage group appreciation of everyone's contributions.

12

**Why would Rainsford be cool-headed in such a dangerous situation?** Vast experience hunting dangerous game in remote places has prepared him to avoid panic when faced with danger.

13

**Foreshadowing.** Animal cry is hint of danger ahead.

14

Experienced hunter should be able to identify at least general category of animal from cry; Rainsford's failure to identify sound creates **suspense**.

15

**Irony.** "Muttering and growling" not ordinarily a welcome sound; image allies Rainsford with animal presence.

16

Vivid detail ("his hands raw") causes reader to sympathize with Rainsford's plight.

17

**Characterization.** Use of syllogisms—formulas of logic—reveals Rainsford is a reasoning and calculating individual, foreshadowing Zaroff's later comment about qualities needed for "the most dangerous game."

18

**Why is the situation unusual?** A twenty-two is a small-caliber weapon, normally used for small, harmless game; to hunt large quarry with it would be foolish and dangerous.

19

Assumes if he can find a hunter, someone who shares his interests, hunter will give him food, befriend him.

tain coolheadedness had come to him; it was not the first time he had been in a tight place. There was a chance that his cries could be heard by someone aboard the yacht, but that chance was slender, and grew more slender as the yacht raced on. He wrestled himself out of his clothes, and shouted with all his power. The lights of the yacht became faint and ever-vanishing fireflies; then they were blotted out entirely by the night.

Rainsford remembered the shots. They had come from the right, and doggedly he swam in that direction, swimming with slow, deliberate strokes, conserving his strength. For a seemingly endless time he fought the sea. He began to count his strokes; he could do possibly a hundred more and then—

13 Rainsford heard a sound. It came out of the darkness, a high screaming sound, the sound of an animal in an extremity of anguish and terror.

14 He did not recognize the animal that made the sound; he did not try to; with fresh vitality he swam toward the sound. He heard it again; then it was cut short by another noise, crisp, staccato.

"Pistol shot," muttered Rainsford, swimming on.

Ten minutes of determined effort brought 15 another sound to his ears—the most welcome he had ever heard—the muttering and growling of the sea breaking on a rocky shore. He was almost on the rocks before he saw them; on a night less calm he would have been shattered against them. With his remaining strength he dragged himself from the swirling waters. Jagged crags appeared to jut up into the opaqueness; he forced himself upward,

16 hand over hand. Gasping, his hands raw, he reached a flat place at the top. Dense jungle came down to the very edge of the cliffs. What perils that tangle of trees and underbrush might hold for him did not concern Rainsford

just then. All he knew was that he was safe from his enemy, the sea, and that utter weariness was on him. He flung himself down at the jungle edge and tumbled headlong into the deepest sleep of his life.

When he opened his eyes he knew from the position of the sun that it was late in the afternoon. Sleep had given him new vigor; a sharp hunger was picking at him. He looked about him, almost cheerfully.

17 "Where there are pistol shots, there are men. Where there are men, there is food," he thought. But what kind of men, he wondered, in so forbidding a place? An unbroken front of snarled and ragged jungle fringed the shore.

He saw no sign of a trail through the closely knit web of weeds and trees; it was easier to go along the shore, and Rainsford floundered along by the water. Not far from where he had landed, he stopped.

Some wounded thing, by the evidence a large animal, had thrashed about in the underbrush; the jungle weeds were crushed down and the moss was lacerated; one patch of weeds was stained crimson. A small, glittering object not far away caught Rainsford's eye and he picked it up. It was an empty cartridge.

18 "A twenty-two," he remarked. "That's odd. It must have been a fairly large animal too. The hunter had his nerve to tackle it with a light gun. It's clear that the brute put up a fight. I suppose the first three shots I heard was when the hunter flushed his quarry<sup>2</sup> and wounded it. The last shot was when he trailed it here and finished it."

19 He examined the ground closely and found what he had hoped to find—the print of hunting boots. They pointed along the cliff in the direction he had been going. Eagerly he hurried along, now slipping on a rotten log or a

2. **flushed his quarry:** forced the game that was being hunted into the open.

loose stone, but making headway; night was beginning to settle down on the island.

Bleak darkness was blacking out the sea and jungle when Rainsford sighted the lights. He came upon them as he turned a crook in the coastline, and his first thought was that he had come upon a village, for there were many lights. But as he forged along he saw to his great astonishment that all the lights were in one enormous building—a lofty structure with pointed towers plunging upward into the gloom. His eyes made out the shadowy outlines of a palatial château;<sup>3</sup> it was set on a high bluff, and on three sides of it cliffs dived down to where the sea licked greedy lips in the shadows.

“Mirage,” thought Rainsford. But it was no mirage, he found, when he opened the tall spiked iron gate. The stone steps were real enough; the massive door with a leering gargoyle<sup>4</sup> for a knocker was real enough; yet about it all hung an air of unreality.

He lifted the knocker, and it creaked up stiffly, as if it had never before been used. He let it fall, and it startled him with its booming loudness. He thought he heard steps within; the door remained closed. Again Rainsford lifted the heavy knocker, and let it fall. The door opened then, opened as suddenly as if it were on a spring, and Rainsford stood blinking in the river of glaring gold light that poured out. The first thing Rainsford’s eyes discerned was the largest man Rainsford had ever seen—a gigantic creature, solidly made and black-bearded to the waist. In his hand the man held a long-barreled revolver, and he was pointing it straight at Rainsford’s heart.

Out of the snarl of beard two small eyes regarded Rainsford.

“Don’t be alarmed,” said Rainsford, with a

smile which he hoped was disarming. “I’m no robber. I fell off a yacht. My name is Sanger Rainsford of New York City.”

The menacing look in his eyes did not change. The revolver pointed as rigidly as if the giant were a statue. He gave no sign that he understood Rainsford’s words, or that he had even heard them. He was dressed in uniform, a black uniform trimmed with gray astrakhan.<sup>5</sup>

“I’m Sanger Rainsford of New York,” Rainsford began again. “I fell off a yacht. I am hungry.”

The man’s only answer was to raise with his thumb the hammer of his revolver. Then Rainsford saw the man’s free hand go to his forehead in a military salute, and he saw him click his heels together and stand at attention. Another man was coming down the broad marble steps, an erect, slender man in evening clothes. He advanced to Rainsford and held out his hand.

In a cultivated voice marked by a slight accent that gave it added precision and deliberateness, he said: “It is a very great pleasure and honor to welcome Mr. Sanger Rainsford, the celebrated hunter, to my home.”

Automatically Rainsford shook the man’s hand.

“I’ve read your book about hunting snow leopards in Tibet, you see,” explained the man. “I am General Zaroff.”

Rainsford’s first impression was that the man was singularly handsome; his second was that there was an original, almost bizarre quality about the general’s face. He was a tall man past middle age, for his hair was a vivid white; but his thick eyebrows and pointed military mustache were as black as the night from which Rainsford had come. His eyes, too, were black

20

Building would seem more natural in a European setting than on jungle island.

21

**Suspense.** Huge man appears dangerous, foreboding.

22

**What is ironic about Rainsford’s comment, and what does it tell us about his character?** Rainsford is threatened by gun, yet assumes he may be perceived as threatening; shows him to be stouthearted, fearless, and perhaps naive.

23

**Disarming** has two meanings here—making hostile forces friendly and literally causing giant to put away weapon.

24

Zaroff appears as a kind of savior at this point—he offers not only hospitality but also respect for Rainsford; he knows who Rainsford is.

25

**Foreshadowing.** “Almost bizarre quality” of general’s face foreshadows his bizarre behavior.

3. **château** (shā-tō’): castle or large country house.

4. **gargoyle** (gār’gōil’): a grotesque carved figure, usually of an animal or mythical creature.

5. **astrakhan** (ās’tṛā-kān’): the curled fur of young lambs.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

"The Most Dangerous Game" has for years been very popular with young readers because it works out a simple conflict between an evil and a good character. Pictured on the left, the evil Zaroff acts refined and well-bred. Almost everything about Zaroff is "cultivated." He lives in a palatial mansion, drinks the finest wines, and reads the best literature. He is cultured—except for his barbaric disregard for human life. On the right, Sanger Rainsford, a celebrated hunter and author, listens incredulously to Zaroff tell of his hunting the ideal quarry, one that can reason (man).



Scenes on pages 16, 23, and 26–27 are from a film version of "The Most Dangerous Game."

26

Ivan's name recalls Ivan the Terrible, blood-thirsty sixteenth-century Russian czar who killed noblemen who opposed him, murdered his own son in fit of rage, and had wives executed when he wanted to remarry.

27

**Characterization.** Zaroff seems to take pleasure in informing Rainsford that he is Cossack—after noting that Cossacks are a bit savage. Also, red lips and pointed teeth suggest vampire.

28

**Irony.** Spot is restful for Zaroff and a terror for anyone who comes ashore. Also, "restful spot" is suggestive of graveyard.

and very bright. He had high cheekbones, a sharp-cut nose, a spare, dark face, the face of a man used to giving orders, the face of an aristocrat. Turning to the giant in uniform, the general made a sign. The giant put away his pistol, saluted, withdrew.

26 "Ivan is an incredibly strong fellow," remarked the general, "but he has the misfortune to be deaf and dumb. A simple fellow, but, I'm afraid, like all his race, a bit of a savage."

"Is he Russian?"

27 "He is a Cossack,"<sup>6</sup> said the general, and his

smile showed red lips and pointed teeth. "So am I."

"Come," he said, "we shouldn't be chatting here. We can talk later. Now you want clothes, food, rest. You shall have them. This is a most restful spot."

Ivan had reappeared, and the general spoke to him with lips that moved but gave forth no sound.

"Follow Ivan, if you please, Mr. Rainsford," said the general. "I was about to have my dinner when you came. I'll wait for you. You'll find that my clothes will fit you, I think."

It was to a huge, beam-ceilinged bedroom with a canopied bed big enough for six men that Rainsford followed the silent giant. Ivan

6. **Cossack:** Cossacks are a people of the southern Soviet Union noted for their horsemanship and their courage and fierceness in battle.



29 laid out an evening suit, and Rainsford, as he 32 put it on, noticed that it came from a London tailor who ordinarily cut and sewed for none below the rank of duke.

The dining room to which Ivan conducted him was in many ways remarkable. There was a medieval magnificence about it; it suggested a baronial hall of feudal times with its oaken panels, its high ceiling, its vast refectory table where twoscore men could sit down to eat. About the hall were the mounted heads of many animals—lions, tigers, elephants, moose, bears; larger or more perfect specimens Rainsford had never seen. At the great table the general was sitting, alone.

"You'll have a cocktail, Mr. Rainsford," he suggested. The cocktail was surpassingly good; and, Rainsford noted, the table appointments were of the finest—the linen, the crystal, the silver, the china.

They were eating borsch, the rich, red soup with sour cream so dear to Russian palates. 30 Half apologetically General Zaroff said: "We do our best to preserve the amenities of civilization here. Please forgive any lapses. We are well off the beaten track, you know. Do you think the champagne has suffered from its long ocean trip?"

"Not in the least," declared Rainsford. He was finding the general a most thoughtful and affable host, a true cosmopolite. But there was one small trait of the general's that made

31 Rainsford uncomfortable. Whenever he looked up from his plate he found the general studying him, appraising him narrowly.

"Perhaps," said General Zaroff, "you were surprised that I recognized your name. You see, I read all books on hunting published in English, French, and Russian. I have but one passion in my life, Mr. Rainsford, and it is the hunt."

"You have some wonderful heads here," said Rainsford as he ate a particularly well-cooked

filet mignon. "That Cape buffalo is the largest I ever saw."

"Oh, that fellow. Yes, he was a monster."

"Did he charge you?"

"Hurled me against a tree," said the general. "Fractured my skull. But I got the brute."

"I've always thought," said Rainsford, "that the Cape buffalo is the most dangerous of all big game."

For a moment the general did not reply; he was smiling his curious red-lipped smile. Then he said slowly: "No. You are wrong, sir. The Cape buffalo is not the most dangerous big game." He sipped his wine. "Here in my preserve on this island," he said in the same slow tone, "I hunt more dangerous game."

Rainsford expressed his surprise. "Is there big game on this island?"

33 The general nodded. "The biggest."

"Really?"

"Oh, it isn't here naturally, of course. I have to stock the island."

"What have you imported, general?" Rainsford asked. "Tigers?"

The general smiled. "No," he said. "Hunting tigers ceased to interest me some years ago. I exhausted their possibilities, you see. No thrill

34 left in tigers, no real danger. I live for danger, Mr. Rainsford."

The general took from his pocket a gold cigarette case and offered his guest a long black cigarette with a silver tip; it was perfumed and gave off a smell like incense.

"We will have some capital hunting, you and I," said the general. "I shall be most glad to have your society."

"But what game——" began Rainsford.

"I'll tell you," said the general. "You will be amused, I know. I think I may say, in all modesty, that I have done a rare thing. I have invented a new sensation. May I pour you another glass of port, Mr. Rainsford?"

"Thank you, general."

29

**Characterization.** Rainsford is aware of names of international tailors who make clothes for wealthy and famous, suggesting that he is also "cultured."

30

**Irony.** As it turns out, Zaroff is hardly civilized; he simply wants to pamper himself.

31

**How does this observation create tension, and what does it foreshadow?** Being stared at and studied is disconcerting. Zaroff is taking Rainsford's measure because he intends to hunt him.

32

**Filet mignon:** expensive, round cut of prime, lean beefsteak.

33

Comment is not literal; Cape buffalo weighs more than human. "Biggest" is **metaphor** for most challenging, although wording contributes to continuing **suspense** about the quarry Zaroff pursues.

34

**Characterization.** Comment defines Zaroff's main motivation: the thrill of danger.

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage can be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying an accurate generalization. After students have read the passage, ask them to choose the answer that is supported by information given in

the passage. **A.** He would rather invest in securities than be a hunter. (Contradicted by the passage.) **B.** He is looking for a new career. (Unsupported by information in the passage.) **C.** He is looking for suggestions for interesting animals to hunt. (Irrelevant. There is no evidence for this

statement in the passage.) **D.** He wants to be able to match wits with his quarry. (Correct.)

35

**Exposition.** Zaroff's story clarifies background; aristocratic and hunting tastes derive from wealthy upbringing.

36

Zaroff, being of aristocratic family, had to flee country after czar was deposed in Russian Revolution.

37

**What is implied by references to "a tearoom in Monte Carlo" and a "taxi in Paris"?** Exiled aristocrats normally lose wealth. Zaroff's family would have lost estate of quarter-million acres; but by investing overseas before revolution, Zaroff conserved enough wealth to live well without working.

38

Zaroff has become so good at hunting he no longer finds gratification in killing his prey.

39

**Characterization.** Zaroff and Rainsford are alike in that they both think analytically.

40

Reason allows hunter to predict actions that are consistently based on instinct.

41

Zaroff reveals moment when he decided to become hunter of men.

42

Rainsford takes word *invent* literally; his comments reflect impossibility of Zaroff's claim to have "invented" new animal.

The general filled both glasses, and said:

35 "God makes some men poets. Some He makes 38 kings, some beggars. Me He made a hunter. My hand was made for the trigger, my father said. He was a very rich man with a quarter of a million acres in the Crimea, and he was an ardent sportsman. When I was only five years old he gave me a little gun, specially made in Moscow for me, to shoot sparrows with. When I 39 shot some of his prize turkeys with it, he did not punish me; he complimented me on my marksmanship. I killed my first bear in the Caucasus when I was ten. My whole life has been one prolonged hunt. I went into the army—it was expected of noblemen's sons—and for a time commanded a division of Cossack cavalry, but my real interest was always the hunt. I have hunted every kind of game in every land. It would be impossible for me to tell you how many animals I have killed."

The general puffed at his cigarette.

36 ▶ "After the debacle<sup>7</sup> in Russia I left the country, for it was imprudent for an officer of the Czar to stay there. Many noble Russians lost everything. I, luckily, had invested heavily in American securities, so I shall never have to 37 open a tearoom in Monte Carlo or drive a taxi in Paris. Naturally, I continued to hunt—grizzlies in your Rockies, crocodiles in the Ganges, rhinoceroses in East Africa. It was in Africa that the Cape buffalo hit me and laid me up for six months. As soon as I recovered I started for the Amazon to hunt jaguars, for I had heard they were unusually cunning. They weren't." The Cossack sighed. "They were no match at all for a hunter with his wits about him, and a high-powered rifle. I was bitterly disappointed. I was lying in my tent with a splitting headache one night when a terrible 42

thought pushed its way into my mind. Hunting was beginning to bore me! And hunting, remember, had been my life. I have heard that in America businessmen often go to pieces when they give up the business that has been their life." ◀

"Yes, that's so," said Rainsford.

The general smiled. "I had no wish to go to pieces," he said. "I must do something. Now, mine is an analytical mind, Mr. Rainsford. Doubtless that is why I enjoy the problems of the chase."

"No doubt, General Zaroff."

"So," continued the general, "I asked myself why the hunt no longer fascinated me. You are much younger than I am, Mr. Rainsford, and have not hunted as much, but you perhaps can guess the answer."

"What was it?"

"Simply this: hunting had ceased to be what you call 'a sporting proposition.' It had become too easy. I always got my quarry. Always. There is no greater bore than perfection."

The general lit a fresh cigarette.

"No animal had a chance with me any more. That is no boast; it is a mathematical certainty. The animal had nothing but his legs and his instinct. Instinct is no match for reason. When I thought of this it was a tragic moment for me, I can tell you."

Rainsford leaned across the table, absorbed in what his host was saying.

"It came to me as an inspiration what I must do," the general went on.

"And that was?"

The general smiled the quiet smile of one who has faced an obstacle and surmounted it with success. "I had to invent a new animal to hunt," he said.

"A new animal? You're joking."

"Not at all," said the general. "I never joke about hunting. I needed a new animal. I found one. So I bought this island, built this house,

7. **debacle** (dī-bā'kəl): collapse; here, referring to the overthrow of the empire of the czars in 1917.

and here I do my hunting. The island is perfect for my purposes—there are jungles with a maze of trails in them, hills, swamps——”

“But the animal, General Zaroff?”

“Oh,” said the general, “it supplies me with the most exciting hunting in the world. No other hunting compares with it for an instant. Every day I hunt, and I never grow bored now, for I have a quarry with which I can match my wits.”

Rainsford’s bewilderment showed in his face.

43 “I wanted the ideal animal to hunt,” explained the general. “So, I said: ‘What are the attributes of an ideal quarry?’ And the answer was, of course: ‘It must have courage, cunning, and, above all, it must be able to reason.’”

“But no animal can reason,” objected Rainsford.

“My dear fellow,” said the general, “there is one that can.”

“But you can’t mean——” gasped Rainsford.

“And why not?”

“I can’t believe you are serious, General Zaroff. This is a grisly joke.”

“Why should I not be serious? I am speaking of hunting.”

“Hunting? General Zaroff, what you speak of is murder.”

The general laughed with entire good nature. He regarded Rainsford quizzically. “I refuse to believe that so modern and civilized a young man as you seem to be harbors romantic ideas about the value of human life. Surely

44 your experiences in the war——”

45 “Did not make me condone cold-blooded murder,” finished Rainsford stiffly.

Laughter shook the general. “How extraordinarily droll you are!” he said. “One does not expect nowadays to find a young man of the educated class, even in America, with such a

46 naive, and, if I may say so, mid-Victorian point

47 of view. It’s like finding a snuffbox in a limousine. Ah, well, doubtless you had Puritan ancestors. So many Americans appear to have had. I’ll wager you’ll forget your notions when you go hunting with me. You’ve a genuine new thrill in store for you, Mr. Rainsford.”

48 “Thank you, I’m a hunter, not a murderer.”

“Dear me,” said the general, quite unruffled. “Again that unpleasant word. But I think I can show you that your scruples are quite ill-founded.”

“Yes?”

49 “Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and, if need be, taken by the strong. The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure. I am strong. Why should I not use my gift? If I wish to hunt, why should I not? I hunt the scum of the earth—sailors from tramp ships—lascars, blacks, Chinese, whites, mongrels—a thoroughbred horse or hound is worth more than a score of them.”

“But they are men,” said Rainsford hotly.

“Precisely,” said the general. “That is why I use them. It gives me pleasure. They can reason, after a fashion. So they are dangerous.”

“But where do you get them?”

The general’s left eyelid fluttered down in a wink. “This island is called Ship-Trap,” he answered. “Sometimes an angry god of the high seas sends them to me. Sometimes, when Providence is not so kind, I help Providence a bit. Come to the window with me.”

Rainsford went to the window and looked out toward the sea.

“Watch! Out there!” exclaimed the general, pointing into the night. Rainsford’s eyes saw only blackness, and then, as the general pressed a button, far out to sea Rainsford saw the flash of lights.

The general chuckled. “They indicate a channel,” he said, “where there’s none: giant rocks with razor edges crouch like a sea mon-

43

Alert readers will catch hint regarding perfect animal’s ability to reason; it has long been thought that only humans can reason. Rainsford does not catch suggestion when it is first made.

44

Refers to World War I, a horror for average soldier. Subjected to incessant shelling, men huddled in trenches, where they were gnawed on by rats and decimated by disease. Zaroff implies war demonstrated human life must have no real value, given man’s brutality to man.

45

Rainsford maintained value system in spite of war.

46

During reign of Queen Victoria of England, most people assumed life was continuously getting better and humankind was perfectible.

47

Simile. Zaroff indicates Rainsford’s values are old-fashioned.

48

*What does Rainsford’s answer tell us about what he expects to happen?* Has not realized what Zaroff plans; thinks he will be invited to hunt, not that he will be hunted.

49

Comment is common misinterpretation of notion of “survival of the fittest”; although predators survive by killing, Zaroff does not need to kill to survive.



50

**What is ironic about Zaroff's comment?** Zaroff's hunting and killing humans for sport is certainly not civilized behavior.

51

**Conflict.** Zaroff begins to react with anger to Rainsford's insult, then sees "loophole" in Rainsford's argument: Zaroff does not simply "shoot down men."

52

Zaroff is aristocrat, assumes that sailors are "lower class," so they must be "inferior."

53

That Rainsford refrains from saying what he would like to say suggests he is beginning to feel fear.

54

Probably refers to Nicholas II, czar of Russia from 1894 to 1917, who was forced by revolutionaries to abdicate.

55

**Why do the men choose the hunt instead of Ivan?** With Ivan their fates are certain; with hunt they have chance, even though remote.

56

**Imagery.** Visual images of moving shadows and dogs' green eyes create sinister atmosphere.

ster with wide-open jaws. They can crush a ship as easily as I crush this nut." He dropped a walnut on the hardwood floor and brought his heel grinding down on it. "Oh, yes," he said, casually, as if in answer to a question, "I

50 have electricity. We try to be civilized here."

"Civilized? And you shoot down men?"

51 A trace of anger was in the general's black eyes, but it was there for but a second, and he said, in his most pleasant manner: "Dear me, what a righteous young man you are! I assure you I do not do the thing you suggest. That would be barbarous. I treat these visitors with every consideration. They get plenty of good food and exercise. They get into splendid physical condition. You shall see for yourself tomorrow."

"What do you mean?"

"We'll visit my training school," smiled the general. "It's in the cellar. I have about a dozen pupils down there now. They're from the Spanish bark *San Lucar* that had the bad luck

52 to go on the rocks out there. A very inferior lot, I regret to say. Poor specimens and more accustomed to the deck than to the jungle."

He raised his hand, and Ivan, who served as waiter, brought thick Turkish coffee.

53 Rainsford, with an effort, held his tongue in check.

"It's a game, you see," pursued the general blandly. "I suggest to one of them that we go hunting. I give him a supply of food and an excellent hunting knife. I give him three hours' start. I am to follow, armed only with a pistol of the smallest caliber and range. If my quarry eludes me for three whole days, he wins the game. If I find him"—the general smiled—"he loses."

"Suppose he refuses to be hunted?"

"Oh," said the general, "I give him his option, of course. He need not play that game if he doesn't wish to. If he does not wish to hunt, I turn him over to Ivan. Ivan once had the

honor of serving as official knouter<sup>8</sup> to the Great White Czar, and he has his own ideas of sport. Invariably, Mr. Rainsford, invariably they choose the hunt."

"And if they win?"

The smile on the general's face widened. "To date I have not lost," he said.

Then he added, hastily: "I don't wish you to think me a braggart, Mr. Rainsford. Many of them afford only the most elementary sort of problem. Occasionally I strike a tartar. One almost did win. I eventually had to use the dogs."

"The dogs?"

"This way, please. I'll show you."

The general steered Rainsford to a window.

56 The lights from the windows sent a flickering illumination that made grotesque patterns on the courtyard below, and Rainsford could see moving about there a dozen or so huge black shapes; as they turned toward him, their eyes glittered greenly.

"A rather good lot, I think," observed the general. "They are let out at seven every night. If anyone should try to get into my house—or out of it—something extremely regrettable would occur to him." He hummed a snatch of song from the *Folies Bergère*.

"And now," said the general, "I want to show you my new collection of heads. Will you come with me to the library?"

"I hope," said Rainsford, "that you will excuse me tonight, General Zaroff. I'm really not feeling at all well."

"Ah, indeed?" the general inquired solicitously. "Well, I suppose that's only natural, after your long swim. You need a good, restful night's sleep. Tomorrow you'll feel like a new man, I'll wager. Then we'll hunt, eh? I've one rather promising prospect——"

Rainsford was hurrying from the room.

8. **knouter** (nout'ər): A knout is a leather whip that was used in Russia to punish criminals.

"Sorry you can't go with me tonight," called the general. "I expect rather fair sport—a big, strong fellow. He looks resourceful—Well, good night, Mr. Rainsford; I hope you have a good night's rest."

The bed was good, and the pajamas of the softest silk, and he was tired in every fiber of his being, but nevertheless Rainsford could not quiet his brain with the opiate of sleep. He lay, eyes wide open. Once he thought he heard stealthy steps in the corridor outside his room.

57 He sought to throw open the door; it would not open. He went to the window and looked out. His room was high up in one of the towers. The lights of the château were out now, and it was dark and silent, but there was a fragment of sallow moon, and by its wan light he could see, dimly, the courtyard; there, weaving in and out in the pattern of shadow, were black, noiseless forms; the hounds heard him at the window and looked up, expectantly, with their green eyes. Rainsford went back to the bed and lay down. By many methods he tried to put himself to sleep. He had achieved a doze when, just as morning began to come, he heard, far off in the jungle, the faint report of a pistol.

General Zaroff did not appear until luncheon. He was dressed faultlessly in the tweeds of a country squire. He was solicitous about the state of Rainsford's health.

"As for me," sighed the general, "I do not feel so well. I am worried, Mr. Rainsford. Last night I detected traces of my old complaint."

To Rainsford's questioning glance the general said: "Ennui. Boredom."

Then, taking a second helping of crêpes suzette, the general explained: "The hunting was 58 not good last night. The fellow lost his head. He made a straight trail that offered no problems at all. That's the trouble with these sailors; they have dull brains to begin with, and they do not know how to get about in the

woods. They do excessively stupid and obvious things. It's most annoying. Will you have another glass of Chablis, Mr. Rainsford?"

"General," said Rainsford firmly, "I wish to leave this island at once."

59 The general raised his thickets of eyebrows; he seemed hurt. "But, my dear fellow," the general protested, "you've only just come. You've had no hunting——"

60 "I wish to go today," said Rainsford. He saw the dead black eyes of the general on him, studying him. General Zaroff's face suddenly brightened.

He filled Rainsford's glass with venerable Chablis from a dusty bottle.

"Tonight," said the general, "we will hunt—you and I."

Rainsford shook his head. "No, general," he said. "I will not hunt."

The general shrugged his shoulders and delicately ate a hothouse grape. "As you wish, my friend," he said. "The choice rests entirely with you. But may I not venture to suggest that you will find my idea of sport more diverting than Ivan's?"

He nodded toward the corner to where the giant stood, scowling, his thick arms crossed on his hogshead of chest.

61 "You don't mean——" cried Rainsford.

"My dear fellow," said the general, "have I not told you I always mean what I say about hunting? This is really an inspiration. I drink 62 to a foeman worthy of my steel—at last."

The general raised his glass, but Rainsford sat staring at him.

"You'll find this game worth playing," the general said enthusiastically. "Your brain against mine. Your woodcraft against mine. Your strength and stamina against mine. Outdoor chess! And the stake is not without value, 63 eh?"

"And if I win——" began Rainsford huskily.

57

Rainsford is locked in his room; sleeplessness suggests he is horrified by Zaroff's morals; he is uneasy about how he will leave island.

58

*What do you infer that the general has in mind?* Hints that he desires more challenging "game," someone with Rainsford's skills.

59

Rainsford assumes, or pretends to assume, his wish will be granted; however, he surely suspects Zaroff will not let him escape to tell world of happenings on island.

60

*Imagery.* Eyes lack any sign of human emotion.

61

Full realization dawns on Rainsford now; he is to be Zaroff's prey.

62

In challenging intelligent man who is experienced hunter, Zaroff finally has foe worthy of his skills.

63

Chess is a war game that depends on reasoning—quality Zaroff wants in his quarry. "The stake is not without value" is understatement; loser loses his life.

64

**What is Rainsford thinking?**

Because sending Rainsford away from island might reveal Zaroff's secret and bring authorities, Rainsford doubts that Zaroff would ever let him go.

65

Suggests that Zaroff will kill him even if Rainsford eludes Zaroff for three days.

66

**Characterization.** For second time in story, Zaroff talks of caring more about high-breed animals than about humans he kills.

67

Zaroff's French is another example of his cultured background.

68

**Metaphor.** Compares island to "picture" and ocean to "frame." He can't escape area; must work within it.

69

Rainsford uses his knowledge of hunting; he executes number of moves used by foxes in avoiding hounds.

70

Large predatory cats sometimes use trees as vantage points for protection and observation.

"I'll cheerfully acknowledge myself defeated if I do not find you by midnight of the third day," said General Zaroff. "My sloop will place you on the mainland near a town."

64 The general read what Rainsford was thinking.

"Oh, you can trust me," said the Cossack. "I will give you my word as a gentleman and a sportsman. Of course you, in turn, must agree to say nothing of your visit here."

"I'll agree to nothing of the kind," said Rainsford.

65 "Oh," said the general, "in that case—But why discuss that now? Three days hence we can discuss it over a bottle of Veuve Cliquot, unless—"

The general sipped his wine.

Then a businesslike air animated him. "Ivan," he said to Rainsford, "will supply you with hunting clothes, food, a knife. I suggest you wear moccasins; they leave a poorer trail. I suggest too that you avoid a big swamp in the southeast corner of the island. We call it Death Swamp. There's quicksand there. One foolish fellow tried it. The deplorable part of it was that Lazarus followed him. You can imagine

66 my feelings, Mr. Rainsford. I loved Lazarus; he was the finest hound in my pack. Well, I must beg you to excuse me now. I always take a siesta after lunch. You'll hardly have time for a nap, I fear. You'll want to start, no doubt. I shall not follow till dusk. Hunting at night is so much more exciting than by day, don't you think? Au revoir,"<sup>9</sup> Mr. Rainsford, au revoir."

69 General Zaroff, with a deep, courtly bow, strolled from the room.

70 From another door came Ivan. Under one arm he carried khaki hunting clothes, a haversack of food, a leather sheath containing a long-bladed hunting knife; his right hand

rested on a cocked revolver thrust in the crimson sash about his waist. . . .

Rainsford had fought his way through the bush for two hours. "I must keep my nerve. I must keep my nerve," he said through tight teeth.

He had not been entirely clearheaded when the château gates snapped shut behind him. His whole idea at first was to put distance between himself and General Zaroff, and, to this end, he had plunged along, spurred on by the sharp rowels of something very like panic. Now he had got a grip on himself, had stopped, and was taking stock of himself and the situation.

He saw that straight flight was futile; inevitably it would bring him face to face with the sea.

68 He was in a picture with a frame of water, and his operations, clearly, must take place within that frame.

"I'll give him a trail to follow," muttered Rainsford, and he struck off from the rude paths he had been following into the trackless wilderness. He executed a series of intricate loops; he doubled on his trail again and again, recalling all the lore of the fox hunt, and all the dodges of the fox. Night found him leg-weary, with hands and face lashed by the branches, on a thickly wooded ridge. He knew it would be insane to blunder on through the dark, even if he had the strength. His need for rest was imperative and he thought: "I have played the fox, now I must play the cat of the fable." A big tree with a thick trunk and outspread branches was nearby, and, taking care to leave not the slightest mark, he climbed up into the crotch, and stretching out on one of the broad limbs, after a fashion, rested. Rest brought him new confidence and almost a feeling of security. Even so zealous a hunter as General Zaroff could not trace him there, he told himself; only the devil himself could follow that complicated

9. **Au revoir** (ô rə-vwar'): French for "until we meet again."





## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

At the beginning of the story, Rainsford is insensitive to the plight of the big-game animals he hunts. In his world of "two classes—the hunters and the hunted," he assumes the *right* to kill without any thought for the feelings of his quarry—at least until he is himself the hunted.

trail through the jungle after dark. But, perhaps, the general was a devil—

**71** An apprehensive night crawled slowly by like a wounded snake, and sleep did not visit

**72** Rainsford, although the silence of a dead world was on the jungle. Toward morning when a dingy gray was varnishing the sky, the cry of some startled bird focused Rainsford's attention in that direction. Something was coming through the bush, coming slowly, carefully, coming by the same winding way Rainsford had come. He flattened himself down on the limb, and through a screen of leaves almost as thick as tapestry, he watched.

**73**

The thing that was approaching was a man.

It was General Zaroff. He made his way along with his eyes fixed in utmost concentration on the ground before him. He paused, almost beneath the tree, dropped to his knees and studied the ground. **74** Rainsford's impulse was to hurl himself down like a panther, but he saw that the general's right hand held something metallic—a small automatic pistol.

The hunter shook his head several times, as if he were puzzled. Then he straightened up and took from his case one of his black cigarettes; its pungent incenselike smoke floated up to Rainsford's nostrils.

**71**

**Simile.** Night passing slowly as a "wounded snake" evokes image of pain and torture.

**72**

**What does "dead world" suggest?** Complete silence.

**73**

Reference to Zaroff as "something" and "thing" in this paragraph emphasizes his inhuman characteristics.

**74**

**Simile.** Suggests that Rainsford is beginning to feel like an animal.

75

Zaroff's movements have all been deliberate: stopping at precisely right place, looking just far enough not to give away Rainsford's position, and blowing smoke ring in air. His smiling is final clue that he knows where Rainsford is hiding.

76

Realization that Zaroff is merely toying with him destroys his confidence in his skills and hope of escaping.

77

**Conflict.** Here Rainsford's conflict is internal as he fights feeling of panic.

78

**Imagery.** Animal imagery (cat, mouse, bloodhound) underscores inhuman nature of contest.

79

**Imagery.** Again human takes on animal characteristics.

80

Rainsford now begins to use techniques of hunter rather than escape techniques of animals.

81

**Imagery.** Throughout story, author uses tactile **description** effectively to heighten **suspense**. Images of rank vegetation, savage insects, and vicious muck help make reader feel dangers that Rainsford experiences.

Rainsford held his breath. The general's eyes had left the ground and were traveling inch by inch up the tree. Rainsford froze there, every muscle tensed for a spring. But the sharp eyes of the hunter stopped before they reached the limb where Rainsford lay; a smile spread over his brown face. Very deliberately he blew a smoke ring into the air; then he turned his back on the tree and walked carelessly away, back along the trail he had come. The swish of the underbush against his hunting boots grew fainter and fainter.

The pent-up air burst hotly from Rainsford's lungs. His first thought made him feel sick and numb. The general could follow a trail through the woods at night; he could follow an extremely difficult trail; he must have uncanny powers; only by the merest chance had the Cossack failed to see his quarry.

Rainsford's second thought was even more terrible. It sent a shudder of cold horror through his whole being. Why had the general smiled? Why had he turned back?

Rainsford did not want to believe what his reason told him was true, but the truth was as evident as the sun that had by now pushed through the morning mists. The general was playing with him! The general was saving him for another day's sport! The Cossack was the cat; he was the mouse. Then it was that Rainsford knew the full meaning of terror.

"I will not lose my nerve. I will not."

He slid down from the tree, and struck off again into the woods. His face was set and he forced the machinery of his mind to function. Three hundred yards from his hiding place he stopped where a huge dead tree leaned precariously on a smaller, living one. Throwing off his sack of food, Rainsford took his knife from its sheath and began to work with all his energy.

The job was finished at last, and he threw himself down behind a fallen log a hundred

feet away. He did not have to wait long. The cat was coming again to play with the mouse.

Following the trail with the sureness of a bloodhound came General Zaroff. Nothing escaped those searching black eyes, no crushed blade of grass, no bent twig, no mark, no matter how faint, in the moss. So intent was the Cossack on his stalking that he was upon the thing Rainsford had made before he saw it. His foot touched the protruding bough that was the trigger. Even as he touched it, the general sensed his danger and leaped back with the agility of an ape. But he was not quite quick enough; the dead tree, delicately adjusted to rest on the cut living one, crashed down and struck the general a glancing blow on the shoulder as it fell; but for his alertness, he must have been smashed beneath it. He staggered, but he did not fall; nor did he drop his revolver. He stood there, rubbing his injured shoulder, and Rainsford, with fear again gripping his heart, heard the general's mocking laugh ring through the jungle.

"Rainsford," called the general, "if you are within sound of my voice, as I suppose you are, let me congratulate you. Not many men know how to make a Malay man-catcher. Luckily, for me, I too have hunted in Malacca. You are proving interesting, Mr. Rainsford. I am going now to have my wound dressed; it's only a slight one. But I shall be back. I shall be back."

When the general, nursing his bruised shoulder, had gone, Rainsford took up his flight again. It was flight now, a desperate, hopeless flight, that carried him on for some hours. Dusk came, then darkness, and still he pressed on. The ground grew softer under his moccasins; the vegetation grew ranker, denser; insects bit him savagely. Then, as he stepped forward, his foot sank into the ooze. He tried to wrench it back, but the muck sucked viciously at his foot as if it were a giant leech.

With a violent effort, he tore his foot loose. He knew where he was now. Death Swamp and its quicksand.

**82** His hands were tight closed as if his nerve were something tangible that someone in the darkness was trying to tear from his grip. The softness of the earth had given him an idea. He stepped back from the quicksand a dozen feet

**83** or so and, like some huge prehistoric beaver, he began to dig.

**84** Rainsford had dug himself in in France when a second's delay meant death. That had been a placid pastime compared to his digging now. The pit grew deeper; when it was above his shoulders, he climbed out and from some hard saplings cut stakes and sharpened them to a fine point. These stakes he planted in the bottom of the pit with the points sticking up. With flying fingers he wove a rough carpet of weeds and branches and with it he covered the mouth of the pit. Then, wet with sweat and aching with tiredness, he crouched behind the stump of a lightning-charred tree.

He knew his pursuer was coming; he heard the padding sound of feet on the soft earth, and the night breeze brought him the perfume of the general's cigarette. It seemed to Rainsford that the general was coming with unusual swiftness; he was not feeling his way along, foot by foot. Rainsford, crouching there, could not see the general, nor could he see the pit. He lived a year in a minute. Then he felt an impulse to cry aloud with joy, for he heard the sharp crackle of the breaking branches as the cover of the pit gave way; he heard the sharp scream of pain as the pointed stakes found their mark. He leaped up from his place of concealment. Then he cowered back. Three feet from the pit a man was standing, with an electric torch in his hand.

"You've done well, Rainsford," the voice of the general called. "Your Burmese tiger pit has claimed one of my best dogs. Again you score.

I think, Mr. Rainsford, I'll see what you can do **85** against my whole pack. I'm going home for a rest now. Thank you for a most amusing evening."

At daybreak Rainsford, lying near the swamp, was awakened by a sound that made him know that he had new things to learn about fear. It was a distant sound, faint and wavering, but he knew it. It was the baying of a pack of hounds.

Rainsford knew he could do one of two things. He could stay where he was and wait. That was suicide. He could flee. That was postponing the inevitable. For a moment he stood there, thinking. An idea that held a wild chance came to him, and tightening his belt, he headed away from the swamp.

The baying of the hounds drew nearer, then still nearer, nearer, ever nearer. On a ridge Rainsford climbed a tree. Down a watercourse, not a quarter of a mile away, he could see the bush moving. Straining his eyes, he saw the lean figure of General Zaroff; just ahead of him Rainsford made out another figure whose wide shoulders surged through the tall jungle weeds; it was the giant Ivan, and he seemed pulled forward by some unseen force; Rainsford knew that Ivan must be holding the pack in leash.

They would be on him any minute now. His **87** mind worked frantically. He thought of a native trick he had learned in Uganda. He slid down the tree. He caught hold of a springy young sapling and to it he fastened his hunting knife, with the blade pointing down the trail; with a bit of wild grapevine he tied back the sapling. Then he ran for his life. The hounds raised their voices as they hit the fresh scent. **88** Rainsford knew now how an animal at bay feels.

He had to stop to get his breath. The baying

**82**

**Simile.** Clenches hands as though they held his nerve. Knows to lose his nerve means certain death.

**83**

**Simile.** Again Rainsford is compared to animal.

**84**

Reference again to World War I as Rainsford recalls trenches on western front.

**85**

**What does Zaroff's use of dogs tell about his sense of sportsmanship?** Is quite willing to use any method in his hunting and is not merely matching his skills against hunted.

**86**

**Suspense.** Dilemma increases tension; Rainsford sees no viable alternatives.

**87**

Again Rainsford uses offensive technique of hunter instead of defensive technique of hunted.

**88**

Rainsford begins to identify with animals.



89

Rainsford has eliminated at least one of his adversaries, Zaroff's henchman.

90

**Style.** Connell's use of short sentences heightens drama of Rainsford's actions.

91

Until now reader has seen the action through eyes and feelings of Rainsford; will now see action from Zaroff's perspective.

92

Zaroff is ever the aristocrat; however, his humming seems inappropriate immediately following Ivan's death.

93

**Characterization.** Interesting that Zaroff blames his failure on Rainsford, since Zaroff is one who broke one-on-one rules of the hunt.

94

Not only does Zaroff lock in his "guests" but he also locks himself in his bedroom, suggesting paranoia.

of the hounds stopped abruptly, and Rainsford's heart stopped too. They must have reached the knife.

He shinnied excitedly up a tree and looked back. His pursuers had stopped. But the hope that was in Rainsford's brain when he climbed died, for he saw in the shallow valley that General Zaroff was still on his feet. But Ivan was not. The knife, driven by the recoil of the springing tree, had not wholly failed.

89

Rainsford had hardly tumbled to the ground when the pack took up the cry again.

90

"Nerve, nerve, nerve!" he panted, as he dashed along. A blue gap showed between the trees dead ahead. Ever nearer drew the hounds. Rainsford forced himself on toward that gap. He reached it. It was the shore of the sea. Across a cove he could see the gloomy gray stone of the château. Twenty feet below him the sea rumbled and hissed. Rainsford hesitated. He heard the hounds. Then he leaped far out into the sea. . . .

91

When the general and his pack reached the place by the sea, the Cossack stopped. For some minutes he stood regarding the blue-green expanse of water. He shrugged his shoulders. Then he sat down, took a drink of brandy from a silver flask, lit a perfumed cigarette, and hummed a bit from *Madame Butterfly*.<sup>10</sup>

92

General Zaroff had an exceedingly good dinner in his great paneled dining hall that evening. With it he had a bottle of Pol Roger and half a bottle of Chambertin. Two slight annoyances kept him from perfect enjoyment. One was the thought that it would be difficult to replace Ivan; the other was that his quarry

93

had escaped him; of course the American hadn't played the game—so thought the general as he tasted his after-dinner liqueur. In his library he read, to soothe himself, from the



works of Marcus Aurelius.<sup>11</sup> At ten he went up to his bedroom. He was deliciously tired, he said to himself, as he locked himself in. There was a little moonlight, so, before turning on his light, he went to the window and looked down at the courtyard. He could see the great

10. *Madame Butterfly*: an opera by Giacomo Puccini.

11. **Marcus Aurelius**: Roman emperor (161–180), whose book, *Meditations*, is considered a classic of philosophy.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Zaroff wishes for the ideal quarry against which to match his wits, one that will prove a challenge and that has cunning and courage. Rainsford proves himself to be a worthy adversary, yet Zaroff resorts to dogs and even brings Ivan with him to meet Rainsford's challenge. Ask students to write for five minutes about what this reveals about Zaroff's idea of the hunt.

hounds, and he called: "Better luck another time," to them. Then he switched on the light.

A man, who had been hiding in the curtains of the bed, was standing there.

"Rainsford!" screamed the general. "How did you get here?"

"Swam," said Rainsford. "I found it quicker

than walking through the jungle."

The general sucked in his breath and smiled. "I congratulate you," he said. "You have won the game."

**95** Rainsford did not smile. "I am still a beast at bay," he said, in a low, hoarse voice. "Get ready, General Zaroff."

The general made one of his deepest bows.

**95**

*What is the significance of the statement, "I am still a beast at bay"? Rainsford cannot rest until hunt is over; conflict has not been resolved. Also recalls earlier comments about not understanding how hunted animals feel; he refers to himself as animal, suggesting he now has empathy.*

96

**Climax.** This is end of conflict between two men.

97

**Resolution.** Rainsford has survived; Zaroff is dead.

#### READING CHECK

1. Ship-Trap Island (p. 12).
2. Cape buffalo (p. 17).
3. A knife (p. 22).
4. A Malay man-catcher (p. 24).
5. Leaps into sea (p. 26).

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** Rainsford is an American from New York City, a veteran of World War I; Zaroff is a wealthy Cossack who left Russia at time of Revolution. Both men are experienced hunters. **1b.** He would not be able to compete.

**2.** Discussion reveals Rainsford is skilled hunter; suggests island is sinister place. Rainsford hears screams and shot as he swims to island, sees bloodstains and empty cartridge there.

**3a.** Reveals Zaroff's background, twisted philosophy, and conditions for hunt. **3b.** Zaroff is cold-blooded, a murderer; Rainsford is shocked and sickened by Zaroff's hunt.

**4a.** Rainsford is equipped and allowed three hours' lead. Zaroff pursues him and toys with him at first. **4b.** Doubles back on trail, hides like cat, makes Malay man-catcher, digs Burmese tiger pit, sets Ugandan sapling-and-knife trap.

**5a.** Leap into sea to escape hounds. **5b.** To create doubt about Rainsford's fate.

**6.** Yes. Identifies with hunted beasts as he feels panic and fear.

96 "I see," he said. "Splendid! One of us is to furnish a repast for the hounds. The other will sleep in this very excellent bed. On guard, Rainsford. . . ."

97 He had never slept in a better bed, Rainsford decided.

#### Reading Check

1. What is the name of Zaroff's island?
2. Which animal does Rainsford consider to be the most dangerous game?
3. What weapon does Rainsford carry during the hunt?
4. What is the first trap Rainsford plans for Zaroff?
5. How does Rainsford escape from Zaroff and his hounds?

#### For Study and Discussion

##### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

**1.** "The Most Dangerous Game" tells of a struggle between Sanger Rainsford and General Zaroff. **a.** Who are these two men, and what have they in common? **b.** Why would their struggle be less interesting if Rainsford were a doctor, for example, rather than a hunter?

**2.** Two parts of the story provide clues for the struggle that is to come: the discussion on ship between Rainsford and Whitney; and Rainsford's observations—what he sees and hears—as he swims to the island and as he walks to Zaroff's château. How do these episodes hint at the coming struggle?

**3.** The discussions about hunting between Rainsford and Zaroff are important for two reasons: (a) they provide information about the two men and about the coming struggle; and (b) they provide a contrast between them. **a.** What information is provided? **b.** What is the contrast?

**4.** Tell about the hunt itself. **a.** What incidents make you anxious for Rainsford's safety? **b.** What incidents show that he is a worthy foe?

**5.** Near the end of the story, Rainsford is forced to take a desperate chance. **a.** What is it? **b.** Why do you think the author suddenly leaves Rainsford at this point and begins to tell the story through Zaroff's eyes?

**6.** The conversation between Rainsford and Whitney at the opening of the story reveals Rainsford's attitude toward hunting. Do you think his attitude changes in the course of the story? Give evidence to support your answer.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify the major **conflicts** in the story and tell whether each conflict is internal or external. Allow students to comment on their reactions to the events and characters in the story.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Zaroff says, "Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and, if need be, taken by the strong. The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure." Divide the class into two debating teams—one agreeing with Zaroff's state-

ment and the other disagreeing. Give students an evening to think about arguments and examples for their positions and schedule the debate for the next day.

In discussing Ship-Trap Island, Whitney says that he sometimes thinks that evil is real, that it

## Literary Elements

### Conflict

**Conflict** is an important element in stories, novels, and plays. A conflict is a struggle between opposing forces or points of view. A conflict may take place between two individuals, between an individual and an animal, or between an individual and some natural force. Conflicts in which individuals struggle against something outside themselves are known as **external conflicts**. A conflict that takes place within an individual is called **internal conflict**.

- The most obvious conflict in "The Most Dangerous Game" is between Rainsford and
- 1 Zaroff. Are there other external conflicts? Is
  - 2 there also an internal conflict?

### Suspense and Foreshadowing

Skillful writers can build interest in a story through **suspense**, the quality that makes readers eager to know what happens next. Notice how the author creates suspense about Rainsford's fate in this episode of the story:

Rainsford held his breath. The general's eyes had left the ground and were traveling inch by inch up the tree. Rainsford froze there, every muscle tensed for a spring. But the sharp eyes of the hunter stopped before they reached the limb where Rainsford lay; a smile spread over his brown face. Very deliberately he blew a smoke ring into the air; then he turned his back on the tree and walked carelessly away, back along the trail he had come. The swish of the underbrush against his hunting boots grew fainter and fainter.

- To build up suspense, an author often plants clues early in the story that hint at what will come later. The planting of such clues is called
- 1 **foreshadowing**. How is the major action of the story foreshadowed in the conversation between Rainsford and Whitney? In Rainsford's
  - 2 arrival at the island? How does this foreshadowing help create suspense?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Finding Meaning from Context

Sometimes you may be able to derive the definition of an unfamiliar word (or a familiar word used in an unfamiliar way) by using **context clues**—clues supplied by other words within the sentence or paragraph:

... Rainsford noted, the table *appointments* were of the finest—the linen, the crystal, the silver, the china.

The word *appointments*, meaning "equipment" or "furnishings" is made clear by the context.

- 1 Use context clues to determine the meaning of the italicized words in these sentences from the story. Check your answers in the glossary at the back of this book or in a dictionary.

Whenever he looked up from his plate he found the general studying him, *appraising* him narrowly.

His hands were tight closed as if his nerve were something *tangible* that someone in the darkness was trying to tear from his grip.

"One of us is to furnish a *repast* for the hounds."

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

### Conflict

1. Other external conflicts are Rainsford's conflict of ideas with Whitney, struggle with sea, initial confrontation with Ivan, struggle with quicksand, flight from Ivan and hounds, Zaroff's pursuit of sailors.

2. In Rainsford's repeated efforts to keep his nerve, and in minds of Whitney and sailors as they fear island.

### Suspense and Foreshadowing

1. Conversation between Rainsford and Whitney provides information about Rainsford's skill as hunter and suggests that those skills will be important in story. Conversation also hints at sinister nature of Ship-Trap Island.

2. Episode that tells of Rainsford's arrival at island also indicates that something or someone is being hunted.

3. All these clues create uneasiness and prepare readers for central conflict.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Appraising**: evaluating; judging.

**Tangible**: capable of being touched or felt.

**Repast**: a meal.

has wavelengths just as sound and light do. Ask students to create their own short stories using Whitney's statement as a premise, or have them write an essay describing a time in their own lives when they felt the sense of evil that Whitney describes.

### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Since the word *game* can refer to an amusement, a sport, a scheme, a profession, a contest, or animals hunted for sport, students' responses will vary widely. Point out that the layers of meaning and ironic contradictions of the title increase the story's suspense and tension.

### CREATIVE WRITING

Prepare for this composition by discussing actual conflicts. A few possible topics are these: meeting a bully on the way home from school; running a race against a student from another school; meeting a bear face to face in a national park; trying to stop a runaway horse; being lost in the woods; being caught in a hurricane; debating whether to phone a person of the opposite sex; struggling to decide between studying and going out. Have students consider actions, dialogue, sensory details, and thoughts that will heighten suspense.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After graduating from Harvard in 1915, Connell enlisted in the army, serving as a private in France for one year. In 1919 he began writing full time, winning the O. Henry Award in 1923 for his short story, "A Friend of Napoleon." His last 25 years were spent in Beverly Hills, California, where he wrote stories and screenplays. He died of a heart attack in November 1949.

Many entertaining stories, true and fictional, have island settings. Bring a library cart filled with island adventure stories to class and check them out to students. Possibilities include *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson, *Pitcairn's Island* by Charles B. Nordhoff and James Norman

Hall, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, *Aku-Aku: The Secret of Easter Island* by Thor Heyerdahl, *Swiss Family Robinson* by Johann Wyss, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell, *Mysterious Island* by Jules Verne, and *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Analyzing a Title

The title of a literary work often is an important clue to what is in store for the reader. Consider the word *game* in the title of Connell's story. What different meanings could it have? In a paragraph, tell what you think is the best interpretation of the title.

*Prewriting Suggestions:* Consult a dictionary to determine if the word *game* has any additional meanings relevant to the story.

Choose those meanings that are best.

List specific evidence in the story (details, dialogue, description) to support your choices.

For additional help in planning and writing this paper, see the section called *Writing About Literature* in this textbook.

## Creative Writing

### Writing a Paragraph with Conflict and Suspense

Most of the suspense in Connell's story is related to the external conflict between Rainsford and Zaroff. The reader wants to know whether Rainsford will survive the ordeal.

Write a paragraph that could be part of a longer story. Introduce a conflict and create suspense about the outcome. You may write about an external conflict—between two persons, between a person and an animal, or between a person and nature—or an internal conflict—a struggle between opposing parts of a person's inner nature.

See the guidelines for writing a narrative on pages 210–212 of this textbook.

## About the Author

### Richard Connell (1893–1949)

Richard Connell began his writing career at an early age. He has said, "My first writing was done for the newspaper my father edited in Poughkeepsie, New York. I covered baseball games. I was ten years old and got ten cents a game."

Connell attended Harvard College, where he was an editor on the *Daily Crimson* and the *Lampoon*, Harvard's humor magazine. After college, he worked in New York City, first for a newspaper and then for an advertising firm. In 1919 he decided to make his living as a freelance writer. He once estimated that he had sold about three hundred short stories to American and English magazines. He also wrote several novels and many screenplays. "The Most Dangerous Game" is his best-known story. It has appeared in numerous anthologies and has been adapted for the movies and television.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the **exposition, conflict, complications, climax, and resolution** in "The Lady, or the Tiger?" For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 38 will give students practice in determining the exact meaning of each word in a pair of words that are close in meaning.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Tell students that the outcome of "The Lady, or the Tiger?" has been hotly debated many times. Encourage them to note the king's idea of justice, the reaction of his subjects, and the character of the princess and her beloved.

# The Lady, or the Tiger?

**FRANK R. STOCKTON**

*The title of this story poses a question. How will you answer it?*

1 In the very olden time there lived a 2 semibarbaric king, whose ideas, though somewhat polished and sharpened by the progressiveness of distant Latin neighbors, were still large, florid, and untrammelled,<sup>1</sup> as became the half of him which was barbaric.<sup>1</sup> He was a man of exuberant fancy, and, withal,<sup>2</sup> of an authority so irresistible that, at his will, he turned his varied fancies into facts. He was greatly given to self-communing; and when he and himself agreed upon anything, the thing was done. When every member of his domestic and political systems moved smoothly in its appointed 3 course, his nature was bland and genial; but whenever there was a little hitch, and some of his orbs got out of their orbits, he was blander and more genial still, for nothing pleased him so much as to make the crooked straight, and crush down uneven places.

Among the borrowed notions by which his barbarism had become semified<sup>3</sup> was that of the public arena, in which, by exhibitions of

4 manly and beastly valor, the minds of his subjects were refined and cultured.

But even here the exuberant and barbaric fancy asserted itself. The arena of the king was built not to give the people an opportunity of hearing the rhapsodies of dying gladiators, nor to enable them to view the inevitable conclusion of a conflict between religious opinions and hungry jaws, but for purposes far better adapted to widen and develop the mental energies of the people. This vast amphitheater,<sup>4</sup> with its encircling galleries, its mysterious vaults, and its unseen passages, was an agent of 5 poetic justice, in which crime was punished, or virtue rewarded, by the decrees of an impartial and incorruptible chance.

When a subject was accused of a crime of sufficient importance to interest the king, public notice was given that on an appointed day the fate of the accused person would be decided in the king's arena—a structure which well deserved its name; for, although its form and plan were borrowed from afar, its purpose emanated solely from the brain of this man,

4. **amphitheater** (ăm'fə-thē'ō-tər): an open arena with rising tiers of seats.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the question posed in the title and challenges the reader to answer it. Explain to students that their answers will depend on their understanding of the **characterization** of the princess in the story.

## The Lady, or the Tiger?

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **exposition, conflict, and resolution** in the selection.

1

**Exposition.** Author establishes time of story in opening line of exposition. First eight paragraphs provide further background information about king and his system of justice.

2

Narrator anticipates dilemma of story's ending by saying king is "semibarbaric"; refinement could overcome barbaric instincts.

3

**Irony.** Narrator characterizes king as "bland and genial," then proceeds to show him as a tyrant who enjoys exercising his power.

4

**Irony.** Arena actually had opposite effect; people accepted system and grew to enjoy seeing bloody spectacles.

5

Judge or jury might be subject to corruption through bribery; random justice cannot be corrupted, but it also has only fifty-fifty chance of being correct.

1. **untrammelled** (ün-trăm'əld): not hindered or restrained.

2. **withal** (with-əl'): besides.

3. **semified**: reduced in half or made partial.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 2 / Selection Test 2 / Reading Check 2 / Vocabulary Test 2 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 2



### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

A semibarbaric king creates a public arena in which to administer justice by "incorruptible chance." An accused man has to open one of two doors in the amphitheater. Behind one is a tiger that will eat him. Behind the other is a lady

suitable for him to marry. In this story, the king tries a young courtier who has dared to love the king's daughter. The princess learns the secret of the doors and motions to her lover. But does she send him to the lady or to the tiger?

### PRESENTATION

One way to begin the story is to read the masterly first paragraph aloud, clarifying word meanings and sharing the irony of the portrayal. Ask students if they would like to be ruled by a king's fancies after he had "communed" with himself.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Relating Expression Skills

You may want to point out to students that the detail from Barrias' painting was not originally intended to illustrate the selection. However, it does provide an idea of how the princess might look. Encourage students to find or create additional illustrations that could accompany the story.



Detail from *A Spinner* by Felix-Joseph Barrias (1822–1907). Oil on canvas.

**6** **Characterization.** King makes external world an extension of his own thoughts; his wishes become reality.

**7** That doors are exactly alike underscores king's idea of justice. The fate of the accused would be determined by chance.

**8** Emphasizes that trials are not rigged; random chance alone decides guilt and innocence.

**6** who, every barleycorn a king, knew no tradition to which he owed more allegiance than pleased his fancy, and who ingrafted on every adopted form of human thought and action the rich growth of his barbaric idealism.

When all the people had assembled in the galleries, and the king, surrounded by his court, sat high up on his throne of royal state on one side of the arena, he gave a signal, a door beneath him opened, and the accused subject stepped out into the amphitheater. Di-

**7** rectly opposite him, on the other side of the enclosed space, were two doors, exactly alike and side by side. It was the duty and the privilege of the person on trial to walk directly to these doors and open one of them. He could open either door he pleased: he was subject to no guidance or influence but that of the aforementioned impartial and incorruptible chance. **8** If he opened the one, there came out of it a hungry tiger, the fiercest and most cruel that could be procured, which immediately sprang

Have students read on to discover the king's special use of his public arena.

After a good introduction to this story, students should be able to finish their reading at home.

One way to ensure student participation in dis-

cussion after the reading is to arrange small groups according to their stand on the first **For Study and Discussion** question. Ask each group to elect a discussion leader and a recorder and then to prepare a list of story details and arguments in support of the group members' own

stand. After fifteen or twenty minutes of small-group discussion, each recorder should report the evidence accumulated by his or her group. The class might then vote on the most convincing presentation.



The Oakland Museum, gift of the Kahn Foundation

*Tiger: Woodward Gardens* by Samuel Marsden Brookes. Oil on canvas.

upon him and tore him to pieces, as a punishment for his guilt. The moment that the case of the criminal was thus decided, doleful iron bells were clanged, great wails went up from  
 9 the hired mourners posted on the outer rim of the arena, and the vast audience, with bowed heads and downcast hearts, wended slowly their homeward way, mourning greatly that  
 10 one so young and fair, or so old and respected, should have merited so dire a fate.

But if the accused person opened the other

door, there came forth from it a lady, the most suitable to his years and station that his Majesty could select among his fair subjects; and to this lady he was immediately married, as a reward  
 11 of his innocence. It mattered not that he might already possess a wife and family, or that his affections might be engaged upon an object of his own selection: the king allowed no such subordinate arrangements to interfere with his great scheme of retribution and reward. The exercises, as in the other instance, took place

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

The king's system of justice is based on chance: an accused person has an equal chance of being eaten by a hungry tiger or marrying a beautiful lady. Witnesses are not called to testify for or against the accused; the circumstances surrounding the "crime" are not considered; there is no difference in penalty or reward for different types of "crimes." Ask students to write a paragraph explaining what they think are the basic principles of a just legal system.

9  
 What does the presence of "hired mourners" suggest? Responses will vary. May be hint that crowd's reaction is insincere.

10  
 Audience does not question accuracy of "verdict" or appropriateness of sentence; they merely assume accused deserved fate.

11  
 Absurdity of king's imposition of his will on subjects can best be seen in judgment of innocence: marriage results, even if it is bigamous and not desired by the "acquitted."

12

*What is the irony in the statement "Its perfect fairness is obvious"?* Trial is fair only in that secrecy of what is behind either door is carefully guarded. But trial itself is imperfect and unfair because innocent might be killed or guilty rewarded.

13

*What is implied by the statement "The institution was a very popular one"?* Masses shared king's warped sense of justice.

14

**Characterization.** Her independence and passion become challenge to her father, who is used to controlling everything.

15

**Characterization.** Her love is passionate and powerful, not refined or intellectual.

16

**Conflict.** External conflict between king and young man initiates action of story.

17

Tiger must be fiercest because of seriousness of the crime.

18

Though young man is clearly guilty of loving princess, he still may be acquitted because of king's devotion to his system.

immediately, and in the arena. Another door<sup>14</sup> opened beneath the king, and a priest, followed by a band of choristers, and dancing maidens blowing joyous airs on golden horns and treading an epithalamic measure,<sup>5</sup> advanced to where the pair stood side by side; and the wedding was promptly and cheerily solemnized. Then the gay brass bells rang forth their merry peals, the people shouted glad hurrahs, and the innocent man, preceded by children strewing flowers on his path, led<sup>15</sup> his bride to his home.

This was the king's semibarbaric method of<sup>12</sup> administering justice. Its perfect fairness is obvious. The criminal could not know out of<sup>16</sup> which door would come the lady: he opened either he pleased, without having the slightest idea whether, in the next instant, he was to be devoured or married. On some occasions the tiger came out of one door, and on some out of the other. The decisions of this tribunal were not only fair, they were positively determinate:<sup>6</sup> the accused person was instantly punished if he found himself guilty; and if innocent, he was rewarded on the spot, whether he liked it or not. There was no escape from the judgments of the king's arena.

<sup>13</sup> The institution was a very popular one. When the people gathered together on one of the great trial days, they never knew whether they were to witness a bloody slaughter or a hilarious wedding. This element of uncertainty lent an interest to the occasion which it could not otherwise have attained. Thus the masses were entertained and pleased, and the thinking part of the community could bring no charge of unfairness against this plan; for did not the accused person have the whole matter<sup>18</sup> in his own hands?

This semibarbaric king had a daughter as

blooming as his most florid fancies, and with a soul as fervent and imperious as his own. As is usual in such cases, she was the apple of his eye, and was loved by him above all humanity. Among his courtiers was a young man of that fineness of blood and lowness of station common to the conventional heroes of romance who love royal maidens. This royal maiden was well satisfied with her lover, for he was handsome and brave to a degree unsurpassed in all this kingdom; and she loved him with an ardor that had enough of barbarism in it to make it exceedingly warm and strong. This love affair moved on happily for many months, until one day the king happened to discover its existence. He did not hesitate nor waver in regard to his duty in the premises. The youth was immediately cast into prison, and a day was appointed for his trial in the king's arena. This, of course, was an especially important occasion; and his Majesty, as well as all the people, was greatly interested in the workings and development of this trial. Never before had such a case occurred; never before had a subject dared to love the daughter of a king. In after years such things became commonplace enough; but then they were, in no slight degree, novel and startling.

<sup>17</sup> The tiger cages of the kingdom were searched for the most savage and relentless beasts, from which the fiercest monster might be selected for the arena; and the ranks of maiden youth and beauty throughout the land were carefully surveyed by competent judges, in order that the young man might have a fitting bride in case fate did not determine for him a different destiny. Of course everybody<sup>18</sup> knew that the deed with which the accused was charged had been done. He had loved the princess, and neither he, she, nor anyone else thought of denying the fact; but the king would not think of allowing any fact of this kind to interfere with the workings of the tri-

5. **treading an epithalamic** (ép'a-thə-lá'mik) **measure:** performing a wedding dance.

6. **determinate** (dī-tūr'mə-nīt): final.



bunal, in which he took such a great delight and satisfaction. No matter how the affair turned out, the youth would be disposed of; **19** and the king would take an aesthetic<sup>7</sup> pleasure in watching the course of events, which would **20** determine whether or not the young man had done wrong in allowing himself to love the princess.

The appointed day arrived. From far and near the people gathered, and thronged the great galleries of the arena; and crowds, unable to gain admittance, massed themselves against its outside walls. The king and his court were in their places, opposite the twin doors—those fateful portals, so terrible in their similarity.

All was ready. The signal was given. A door beneath the royal party opened, and the lover **21** of the princess walked into the arena. Tall, beautiful, fair, his appearance was greeted with a low hum of admiration and anxiety. Half the audience had not known so grand a youth had lived among them. No wonder the princess loved him! What a terrible thing for him to be there!

As the youth advanced into the arena, he turned, as the custom was, to bow to the king; but he did not think at all of that royal personage; his eyes were fixed upon the princess, who sat to the right of her father. Had it not been for the moiety<sup>8</sup> of barbarism in her nature it is probable that lady would not have been there; but her intense and fervid soul would not allow her to be absent on an occasion in which she was so terribly interested. From the moment that the decree had gone forth that her lover should decide his fate in the king's arena, she had thought of nothing, night or day, but this great event and the various subjects connected **22** with it. Possessed of more power, influence,

and force of character than anyone who had ever before been interested in such a case, she had done what no other person had done—she had possessed herself of the secret of the doors. She knew in which of the two rooms that lay behind those doors stood the cage of the tiger, with its open front, and in which waited the lady. Through these thick doors, heavily curtained with skins on the inside, it was impossible that any noise or suggestion should come from within to the person who should approach to raise the latch of one of **23** them; but gold, and the power of a woman's will, had brought the secret to the princess.

And not only did she know in which room stood the lady ready to emerge, all blushing and radiant, should her door be opened, but **24** she knew who the lady was. It was one of the fairest and loveliest of the damsels of the court who had been selected as the reward of the accused youth, should he be proved innocent of the crime of aspiring to one so far above him; and the princess hated her. Often had she seen, or imagined that she had seen, this fair creature throwing glances of admiration upon the person of her lover, and sometimes she thought these glances were perceived and even returned. Now and then she had seen them talking together; it was but for a moment or two, but much can be said in a brief space; it may have been on most unimportant topics, but how could she know that? The girl was lovely, but she had dared to raise her eyes to **25** the loved one of the princess; and, with all the intensity of the savage blood transmitted to her through long lines of wholly barbaric ancestors, she hated the woman who blushed and trembled behind that silent door.

When her lover turned and looked at her, and his eye met hers as she sat there paler and whiter than anyone in the vast ocean of anxious faces about her, he saw, by that power of **26** quick perception which is given to those whose

**19**

**Irony.** Scene will be anything but "aesthetic" if man is eaten by tiger.

**20**

In this special case, "correctness" of man's love for princess is to be decided, rather than guilt or innocence.

**21**

Tension is increased because crowd recognizes nobleness of the young man.

**22**

**Characterization.** Princess has determined to decide her lover's fate.

**23**

**What did the princess use to obtain the secret of the doors?** Determination and money; bought secret with gold.

**24**

**Complication.** Princess is jealous not only because prospective bride is beautiful but also because she suspects that woman has already been a competitor for her lover's affections.

**25**

**Characterization.** Although jealousy is natural human emotion, emphasis is on "savage" intensity of princess' feelings toward woman.

**26**

Young man immediately recognizes that princess knows secret of doors.

7. **aesthetic** (ēs-thēt'ik): sensitive to beauty.

8. **moiety** (moi'a-tē): share.

27

Young man knows princess' determined nature; however, he does not realize she is thinking of betraying him.

28

Even the king does not know secret of doors.

29

Young man trusts princess completely; he does not know that the chosen lady is hated by princess.

30

Climax. At this point, young man's fate is assured. He will either be killed or married.

31

Conflict. Stockton reviews princess' emotional struggle.

32

*How do this and the following paragraphs complicate the question of which door the princess signaled?* Stresses princess' internal conflict between jealousy and fear of horrid death for her lover.

33

Conflict. Choices reflect internal conflict between love of another (she cannot stand to see her lover suffer a horrible death; she loves him too much) and self-pity or self-love (she cannot bear to see her lover happy with another; she would be too jealous).

34

Resolution. Although omniscient narrator gives reader much information, princess' choice is not revealed. Reader must choose own resolution.

souls are one, that she knew behind which 32 door crouched the tiger, and behind which stood the lady. He had expected her to know it. He understood her nature, and his soul was assured that she would never rest until she had made plain to herself this thing, hidden to all other lookers-on, even to the king. The only hope for the youth in which there was any element of certainty was based upon the success of the princess in discovering this mystery; and the moment he looked upon her, he saw she had succeeded, as in his soul he knew she would succeed.

Then it was that his quick and anxious glance asked the question, "Which?" It was as plain to her as if he shouted it from where he stood. There was not an instant to be lost. The question was asked in a flash; it must be answered in another.

Her right arm lay on the cushioned parapet before her. She raised her hand, and made a slight, quick movement toward the right. No one but her lover saw her. Every eye was fixed on the man in the arena.

He turned, and with a firm and rapid step he walked across the empty space. Every heart stopped beating, every breath was held, every eye was fixed immovably upon that man. Without the slightest hesitation, he went to the door on the right and opened it.

Now, the point of the story is this: Did the 33 tiger come out of that door, or did the lady?

The more we reflect upon this question the harder it is to answer. It involves a study of the human heart which leads us through devious mazes of passion, out of which it is difficult to find our way. Think of it, fair reader, not as if the decision of the question depended upon yourself, but upon that hot-blooded, semibarbaric princess, her soul at a white heat beneath the combined fires of despair and jealousy. She had lost him, but who should have him?

How often, in her waking hours and in her dreams, had she started in wild horror and covered her face with her hands as she thought of her lover opening the door on the other side of which waited the cruel fangs of the tiger!

But how much oftener had she seen him at the other door! How in her grievous reveries had she gnashed her teeth and torn her hair when she saw his start of rapturous delight as he opened the door of the lady! How her soul had burned in agony when she had seen him rush to meet that woman, with her flushing cheek and sparkling eye of triumph; when she had seen him lead her forth, his whole frame kindled with the joy of recovered life; when she had heard the glad shouts from the multitude, and the wild ringing of the happy bells; when she had seen the priest, with his joyous followers, advance to the couple, and make them man and wife before her very eyes; and when she had seen them walk away together upon their path of flowers, followed by the tremendous shouts of the hilarious multitude, in which her one despairing shriek was lost and drowned!

Would it not be better for him to die at once, and go to wait for her in the blessed regions of semibarbaric futurity?

And yet, that awful tiger, those shrieks, that blood!

Her decision had been indicated in an instant, but it had been made after days and nights of anguished deliberation. She had known she would be asked, she had decided what she would answer, and, without the slightest hesitation, she had moved her hand to the right.

The question of her decision is one not to be lightly considered, and it is not for me to presume to set myself up as the one person able to answer it. And so I leave it with all of you: Which came out of the opened door—the lady, or the tiger?

## CLOSURE

Ask students to define the terms **exposition**, **internal conflict**, **external conflict**, **complication**, **climax**, and **resolution** as elements of plot, giving an example of each from "The Lady, or the Tiger?"

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

To help students understand the rising and falling action common to many plots, you might have the class outline "The Lady, or the Tiger?" in a triangle. (See diagram in *Teacher's Manual*, p. 60.) First, students can list in ascending order

the conflict and the complications that build to a **climax**. Then they can list in descending order the details of the story's unusual **resolution**. Note that the first eight paragraphs of **exposition** are not included in the plot proper. (Not all stories, of course, have an exposition so clearly

### Reading Check

1. For what purpose did the king use his arena?
2. How was a subject's guilt determined?
3. Why was the young courtier thrown into prison?
4. How did the princess learn the secret of the doors?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The author challenges you to guess the outcome of the story. From what you know of the princess, which do you think she would point to: the lady or the tiger? Give reasons to support your answer.
2. At one point you are told that the solution to the question lies in understanding the nature of the princess: "Think of it, fair reader, not as if the decision of the question depended upon yourself, but upon that hot-blooded, semibarbaric princess, . . ." Does the answer lie within the story or within the individual reader?

### Literary Elements

#### Plot

**Plot** is the sequence of events or actions in a story. Plot includes the following: whatever the characters do; whatever they say; whatever they think; and whatever happens to them.

Often before the plot proper begins, a section of **exposition** is provided. The exposition is an introduction; it presents information that helps readers understand the situation of the story. In "The Lady, or the Tiger?" the exposition is given in the first eight paragraphs. What information is presented?

- The action of a story generally evolves out of
- 2 **conflict**. What external and internal conflicts are presented in "The Lady, or the Tiger?"
  - 3 Which do you consider the central conflict?

- Complications are introduced that make it
- 4 difficult to settle the conflict. What complications does Stockton introduce into his story?
  - 5 How do they add interest?

As the story becomes more complicated, it moves to a **climax**. A climax is the point of highest intensity in the story, the point that

- 6 terminates the outcome of the action. What is the climax of this story?

The final part of a story is its **resolution**. A resolution moves down from the high point of the climax and usually settles the conflict or

- 7 conflicts. How does Stockton handle the resolution in this story?

The plots of many stories follow this pattern: exposition, conflict, complications, climax, resolution. If you have already read "The Most Dangerous Game," identify these elements in that story.

#### Irony

There are several kinds of **irony**. All of them depend upon a contrast between appearance and reality. A common kind is **verbal irony**. Verbal irony is a way of saying or writing one thing and meaning the direct opposite. For example, imagine you are tramping through five feet of snow. The temperature is below freezing, and a twenty-mile-an-hour wind is scraping at your cheeks. You say to a friend, "What a lovely day!" By using verbal irony, you give emphasis to your real meaning: What a terrible day!

Writers often describe unpleasant characters or ideas ironically. By pretending to accept these characters or ideas at face value, writers force us to realize how bad they really are. Stockton calls the king's system "poetic justice," but he expects his readers to understand

### READING CHECK

1. To administer justice (p. 31).
2. Guilty if he opened door with tiger behind it (p. 33).
3. Loved the princess (p. 34).
4. Bribery; strong will (p. 35).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Responses will vary. *The Lady*: Princess loves man and dreads prospect of her lover being killed by tiger; may prefer to have her lover live, even though married to another; may have plans to eliminate lady later.  
*The Tiger*: Princess hates lady and is furious at prospect of her lover marrying lady; might rather see man dead than married to lady; is her father's daughter—semibarbaric and cruel.
2. Responses will vary. In reader; if answer lay in story, competent readers would have determined it long ago.

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

#### Plot

1. Exposition reveals whimsical, despotic nature of king and information about amphitheater and popularity of system.
2. *External conflicts*: between king and young man, king and princess, princess and lady. *Internal conflict*: princess.
3. *Central conflict*: internal conflict of princess.
4. Princess learns identity of lady and has difficulty making decision.
5. Reader becomes more curious about which door princess will choose.
6. When man opens door.
7. Leaves to reader.
8. *Exposition*: Rainsford's conversations with Whitney and Zaroff, discoveries on island. *Conflict*: struggle between Rainsford and Zaroff. *Complication*: Zaroff's hunting abilities; dangers of quicksand; Rainsford's unsuccessful attempts to kill Zaroff. *Climax*: Rainsford and Zaroff's fight. *Resolution*: Rainsford's victory over Zaroff.



separable from the main action.)

Some students may want to experiment with the unresolved-ending technique. Have these students choose a familiar fairy tale or legend. Request that they retell it in their own style to include an unresolved, questioning ending like

the one in "The Lady, or the Tiger?"

Throughout history, rulers have devised strange, sometimes cruel, methods of administering justice, as did the semibarbaric king in the story. Some students might like to read about one or more of these systems of justice in ency-

clopedias or in books on criminal justice systems and then make oral presentations to the class.

## Irony

1. Students can explain irony in statements by substituting words of opposite meaning for those in italics. *Refined and cultured: Minds were debased and corrupted*, since people grew to like watching shows of violence.

*Its perfect fairness is obvious* really means *its perfect capriciousness is obvious*, since the method depends entirely on chance.

2. Other examples include "his nature was bland and genial" (p. 31); actually ruthless and cruel. "Thinking part of the community" (p. 34); thinking was limited. "In regard to his duty" (p. 34); "duty" coincides with his cruel inclinations.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Impartial**—unprejudiced; **incorruptible**—incapable of being corrupted morally.

2. **Hesitate**—to be slow to act, speak, or decide; **waver**—to falter or yield. **Novel**—strikingly new, unusual, or different; **startling**—alarming, frightening, or surprising. **Intense**—tending to feel deeply; **fervid**—intensely fervent or zealous.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frank Stockton edited *St. Nicholas*, a children's magazine, from 1873 to 1881. After the publication of his novel *Ruder Grange*, he devoted more of his time to writing for adults. The popularity of *Ruder Grange* led to two sequels: *The Ruder Granges Abroad* and *Pomona's Travels*. A twenty-three-volume collection of his fiction was published between 1899 and 1904.

that his meaning is quite the opposite. In order to understand a writer's irony, we must first decide what the facts really are. If the way things seem to us is very different from the way the writer describes them, then the chances are that the writer is using verbal irony.

- 1 Explain why each of the following statements in "The Lady, or the Tiger?" is ironic. If the irony is not clear, reread each statement in its context in the selection.

[In] the public arena . . . the minds of his subjects were *refined and cultured*. (page 31)

This was the king's semibarbaric method of administering justice. *Its perfect fairness is obvious*. (page 34)

- 2 Find other ironic statements in the story. Point out the contrast between the apparent meaning and the intended meaning.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Distinguishing Meanings

Frank Stockton uses the words *bland* and *genial* to describe the king. Although these words are close in meaning, there is a distinction to be made between them. The word *bland* means "mild or pleasant"; *genial* means "warm and friendly." One could be *bland* without also being *genial*.

Stockton refers to the king's "poetic justice"

- 1 as "impartial and incorruptible chance." What is the distinction between *impartial* and *incorruptible*?  
2 **Use a dictionary to determine the exact meanings of these words and the italicized words in the following sentences:**

He did not *hesitate* nor *waver* in regard to his duty . . .

In after years such things became commonplace enough; but then they were, in no slight degree, *novel* and *startling*.

. . . but her *intense* and *fervid* soul would not allow her to be absent on an occasion in which she was so terribly interested.

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Reacting to a Story

"The Lady, or the Tiger?" is considered a classic of the short-story form. It became an immediate favorite when it appeared in 1882, and it has stood the test of time. What do you think is the reason for the story's continued appeal? Write a paragraph discussing your own reaction to the story.

## Creative Writing

### Writing an Ending to the Story

Frank Stockton leaves it up to you, the reader, to decide what finally happens. Write your own version of the ending, telling what happens when the young man opens the door. To make your ending effective, you might want to show the princess' reaction as the door opens. Or, you might want to show the young man's reaction to what he finds.

## About the Author

Frank R. Stockton (1834–1902)



Frank R. Stockton was born in Philadelphia. His parents thought that he might become a doctor, but he became a wood engraver instead. By 1867 he began to devote more and more time to writing

and less to engraving. First he contributed children's stories to the *Riverside Magazine for Young People*. Then he began to contribute many stories to adult magazines. Stockton's most famous story, "The Lady, or the Tiger?" appeared in 1882 in the *Century* magazine. It caused a great sensation. Debates were held all over the country to decide the ending.

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of **irony** and its relationship to the **plot** of Jack London's "War." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 45 will give students practice in finding the origins and meanings of specific words associated with the military.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to name some characteristics of a hero and possible outcomes for heroes in stories. Upon their mentioning that heroes often win their battles, tell them to be alert to unexpected elements in Jack London's "War."

# War

## JACK LONDON

*As you read, ask yourself why London does not identify this war or the causes for which the soldiers are fighting.*

### I

- 1 He was a young man, not more than twenty-four or -five, and he might have sat his horse with the careless grace of his youth had he not been so catlike and tense. His black eyes roved everywhere, catching the movements of twigs and branches where small birds hopped, questing ever onward through the changing vistas of trees and brush, and returning always to the clumps of undergrowth on either side. And as he watched, so did he listen, though he rode on in silence, save for the boom of heavy guns from far to the west. This had been sounding monotonously in his ears for hours, and only its cessation<sup>1</sup> would have aroused his notice. For he had business closer to hand. Across his saddlebow was balanced a carbine.
- 2 So tensely was he strung that a bunch of quail, exploding into flight from under his horse's nose, startled him to such an extent that automatically, instantly, he had reined in and fetched the carbine halfway to his shoulder.

der. He grinned sheepishly, recovered himself, and rode on. So tense was he, so bent upon the work he had to do, that the sweat stung his eyes unwiped, and unheeded rolled down his nose and splattered his saddle pommel. The band of his cavalryman's hat was fresh-stained with sweat. The roan horse under him was likewise wet. It was high noon of a breathless day of heat. Even the birds and squirrels did not dare the sun, but sheltered in shady hiding places among the trees.

- 3 Man and horse were littered with leaves and dusted with yellow pollen, for the open was ventured no more than was compulsory. They kept to the brush and trees, and invariably the man halted and peered out before crossing a dry glade or naked stretch of upland pasture. He worked always to the north, though his way was devious,<sup>2</sup> and it was from the north that he seemed most to apprehend<sup>3</sup> that for which he was looking. He was no coward, but 4 his courage was only that of the average civilized man, and he was looking to live, not die.

1. **cessation** (sĕ-să'shən): stopping, ceasing.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the

*Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 3 / Selection Test

3 / Reading Check 3 / Vocabulary Test 2 / Vocabulary

Development Worksheet 3

2. **devious** (dĕ'vē-əs): roundabout, not straight.

3. **apprehend** (ăp'ri-hĕnd'): fear, be afraid of.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes London's attempt to keep the specific war, or its causes, ambiguous. You may wish to point out that he also does not name his main character, thus doubly forcing the reader to deal with war as an abstraction, not a specific conflict. Also of particular interest are London's acute eye for **description**, his skill in portraying man in a survival situation, and his sense of **irony**.

## War

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **plot** elements and **irony** in the selection.

### 1

**Characterization.** Establishes young man as "catlike and tense"; man's actions in next few sentences show that he is anxious and in danger.

### 2

**Suspense.** In tense situation, soldier automatically prepares to fight when he is startled.

### 3

**Why is the soldier littered with leaves and pollen?** When possible, he stays under cover; safer to move through woods than out in open where he would make an easy target.

### 4

"Civilized men," supposedly, resolve their disputes in courts of law, not through killing.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

A young cavalryman scouts out the enemy. One hot day, he encounters, but does not shoot, a ginger-bearded man getting water at a stream. Another day, the scout rides up to a deserted farmhouse. Just as he finishes gathering apples,

a dozen mounted enemy soldiers ride up. He is certainly outnumbered. What should he do? Hide? Flee? Attack? Will he survive?

## PRESENTATION

Students who have read *The Call of the Wild*, *White Fang*, or *The Sea Wolf* will know how gripping London's tales of the struggle for survival are. "War" is a suspenseful story, with an ironic ending that will jar young readers who expect their

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Winslow Homer decided early in life that he did not want to follow in his merchant father's footsteps. Instead, he became an apprentice to a lithographer when he was nineteen, learning the skills involved in creating pictures on wood that were used to print illustrations in books and magazines. He then became a freelance illustrator for *Harper's Weekly* and other magazines. His subjects ranged from playful children against a frontier backdrop to soldiers in the midst of the Civil War. In his later years, Homer moved to the New England coast, where he portrayed man in conflict with an angry sea.



*A Rainy Day in Camp* (1871) by Winslow Homer (1836–1910). Oil on canvas.

**5** Battle is taking place far to west; scout avoids moving in that direction.

**6** **Imagery.** Descriptions of soldier's movements and terrain create image of almost suffocating heat and dust and underscore soldier's frustration.

Up a small hillside he followed a cowpath through such dense scrub that he was forced to dismount and lead his horse. But when the path swung around to the west, he abandoned it and headed to the north again along the oak-covered top of the ridge.

The ridge ended in a steep descent—so steep that he zigzagged back and forth across

the face of the slope, sliding and stumbling among the dead leaves and matted vines and keeping a watchful eye on the horse above that threatened to fall down upon him. The sweat ran from him, and the pollen dust, settling pungently<sup>4</sup> in mouth and nostrils, increased

**4. pungently** (pūn'jənt-lē): in a way producing sharp sensations of taste and smell.



heroes to triumph. Students should note that the **setting** of London's story is described in detail, yet never identified. Other than the types of weapons, there are few clues to the period, which could be the American Civil War. London may have wanted readers to take the title liter-

ally, as applicable to the nature of war any time, anywhere. You might ask students to choose and read passages that describe the scout's feelings and help us identify with this young man, who is "looking to live, not die."

Since the story ends so ironically and cruelly,

you might ask its purpose. Are we supposed to conclude that soldiers should never spare the enemy? Is there some other purpose? Responses will vary. Ask students to compare this story with the kind of story or film in which many people are killed but the hero and heroine never die.



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. William F. Milton

his thirst. Try as he would, nevertheless the descent was noisy, and frequently he stopped, panting in the dry heat and listening for any warning from beneath.

At the bottom he came out on a flat,<sup>5</sup> so densely forested that he could not make out its

extent. Here the character of the woods changed, and he was able to remount. Instead of the twisted hillside oaks, tall, straight trees, big-trunked and prosperous, rose from the damp, fat soil. Only here and there were thickets, easily avoided, while he encountered winding, parklike glades where the cattle had  
8 pastured in the days before war had run them off.

His progress was more rapid now, as he came down into the valley, and at the end of half an hour he halted at an ancient rail fence on the edge of a clearing. He did not like the openness of it, yet his path lay across to the fringe of trees that marked the banks of the stream. It was a mere quarter of a mile across that open, but the thought of venturing out in  
9 it was repugnant.<sup>6</sup> A rifle, a score of them, a thousand, might lurk in that fringe by the stream.

Twice he essayed<sup>7</sup> to start, and twice he paused. He was appalled by his own loneliness. The pulse of war that beat from the west suggested the companionship of battling thousands; here was naught but silence, and himself, and possible death-dealing bullets from a myriad<sup>8</sup> ambushes. And yet his task was  
10 to find what he feared to find. He must go on, and on, till somewhere, sometime, he encountered another man, or other men, from the other side, scouting, as he was scouting, to  
11 make report, as he must make report, of having come in touch.

Changing his mind, he skirted inside the woods for a distance, and again peeped forth. This time, in the middle of the clearing, he saw a small farmhouse. There were no signs of life. No smoke curled from the chimney, not a barnyard fowl clucked and strutted. The

6. **repugnant** (rĭ-pŭg'nŏnt): hateful.

7. **essayed**: tried; attempted.

8. **myriad** (mĭr'ē-əd): a countless number of.

7

**Suspense.** Rough terrain makes his travel uncomfortable, but even worse is fear that noise he makes will give away his presence to an unseen enemy.

8

**Style.** London does not name the war, its causes, or the scout. Absence of article *the* before "war" reinforces that story is about war in general.

9

**Suspense.** Soldier's mind forever dwells upon possibility of being hit by unseen bullets.

10

Use to answer study question 1a, p. 44.

11

Scout's responsibility is to encounter enemy, but only for purpose of identifying their position and movements, not to engage in combat.

12

**Foreshadowing.** Soldier cannot drive away visions of own mortality; he fears being killed in ambush.

13

**What is the significance of this detailed description of the man with the ginger-colored beard?** Scout is so close to man that he can see characteristics that identify man as human, individual.

14

**What decision does the scout make and why?** Scout decides not to shoot the man because he can see his humanity; human elements make it harder for him to kill person who may be very much like him.

15

**Imagery.** Visual and sound imagery reinforce individual human characteristics of enemy.

16

Not only does scout spare life of man but, to avoid chance of encounter, he rides off without slaking his thirst.

17

London identifies scout, now on another mission, by feature that underscores his incessant nervousness and fear—his “quick black eyes.”

18

**Description.** That faces bear “no likeness to the faces of men” reinforces dehumanization caused by war.

kitchen door stood open, and he gazed so long and hard into the black aperture<sup>9</sup> that it seemed almost that a farmer's wife must emerge at any moment.

He licked the pollen and dust from his dry lips, stiffened himself, mind and body, and rode out into the blazing sunshine. Nothing stirred. He went on past the house, and approached the wall of trees and bushes by the river's bank. One thought persisted maddeningly. It was of the crash into his body of a high-velocity bullet. It made him feel very fragile and defenseless, and he crouched lower in the saddle.

Tethering his horse in the edge of the wood, he continued a hundred yards on foot till he came to the stream. Twenty feet wide it was, without perceptible current, cool and inviting, and he was very thirsty. But he waited inside his screen of leafage, his eyes fixed on the screen on the opposite side. To make the wait endurable, he sat down, his carbine resting on his knees. The minutes passed, and slowly his tenseness relaxed. At last he decided there was no danger; but just as he prepared to part the bushes and bend down to the water, a movement among the opposite bushes caught his eye.

It might be a bird. But he waited. Again there was an agitation<sup>10</sup> of the bushes, and then, so suddenly that it almost startled a cry from him, the bushes parted and a face peered out. It was a face covered with several weeks' growth of ginger-colored beard. The eyes were blue and wide apart, with laughter-wrinkles in the corners that showed despite the tired and anxious expression of the whole face. All this he could see with microscopic clearness, for the distance was no more than twenty feet. And all this he saw in such brief time that he saw it as he lifted his carbine to his shoulder.

9. **aperture** (ăp'ər-choōr'): opening.

10. **agitation** (ă'jĭ-tă'shən): disturbance.

He glanced along the sights, and knew that he was gazing upon a man who was as good as dead. It was impossible to miss at such point-blank range.

But he did not shoot. Slowly he lowered the carbine and watched. A hand, clutching a water bottle, became visible, and the ginger beard bent downward to fill the bottle. He could hear the gurgle of the water. Then arm and bottle and ginger beard disappeared behind the closing bushes. A long time he waited, when, with thirst unslaked,<sup>11</sup> he crept back to his horse, rode slowly across the sunwashed clearing, and passed into the shelter of the woods beyond.

## II

Another day, hot and breathless. A deserted farmhouse, large, with many outbuildings and an orchard, standing in a clearing. From the woods, on a roan horse, carbine across pommel, rode the young man with the quick black eyes. He breathed with relief as he gained the house. That a fight had taken place here earlier in the season was evident. Clips and empty cartridges, tarnished with verdigris,<sup>12</sup> lay on the ground, which, while wet, had been torn up by the hoofs of horses. Hard by the kitchen garden were graves, tagged and numbered. From the oak tree by the kitchen door, in tattered, weather-beaten garments, hung the bodies of two men. The faces, shriveled and defaced, bore no likeness to the faces of men. The roan horse snorted beneath them, and the rider caressed and soothed it and tied it farther away.

Entering the house, he found the interior a wreck. He trod on empty cartridges as he walked from room to room to reconnoiter<sup>13</sup>

11. **unslaked** (ŭn-slăkd'): unsatisfied.

12. **verdigris** (vŭr'də-grēs): a greenish coating that forms, like rust, on certain metals.

13. **reconnoiter** (rē'kə-noi'tər): make a survey.

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage may be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying the author's point of view or purpose. Ask students to read the following passage and determine which of the following statements best

reflects the author's attitude toward war. **A.** War is glamorous and exciting. (Inaccurate. Details in the paragraph suggest the opposite.) **B.** War makes people see each other as enemies rather than as people. (Correct. "Dried corpses swinging in the shade" suggest treatment accorded a

dead animal, not a person.) **C.** War brings out the best in people. (Inaccurate. Young boy fighting and treatment of corpses contradicts this.) **D.** War requires one to think and act quickly. (Irrelevant. While this may be true, it is not the author's point.)

from the windows. Men had camped and slept everywhere, and on the floor of one room he

**19** came upon stains unmistakable where the wounded had been laid down.

Again outside, he led the horse around behind the barn and invaded the orchard. A dozen trees were burdened with ripe apples.

**20** He filled his pockets, eating while he picked. Then a thought came to him, and he glanced at the sun, calculating the time of his return to camp. He pulled off his shirt, tying the sleeves and making a bag. This he proceeded to fill with apples.

As he was about to mount his horse, the animal suddenly pricked up its ears. The man, too, listened, and heard, faintly, the thud of hoofs on soft earth. He crept to the corner of

**21** the barn and peered out. A dozen mounted men, strung out loosely, approaching from the opposite side of the clearing, were only a matter of a hundred yards or so away. They rode on to the house. Some dismounted, while others remained in the saddle as an earnest<sup>14</sup> that their stay would be short. They seemed to be holding a council, for he could hear them talking excitedly in the detested tongue of the alien invader. The time passed, but they seemed unable to reach a decision. He put the carbine away in its boot, mounted, and waited impatiently, balancing the shirt of apples on the pommel.

▶ He heard footsteps approaching, and drove his spurs<sup>15</sup> so fiercely into the roan as to force a

**22** surprised groan from the animal as it leaped forward. At the corner of the barn he saw the intruder, a mere boy of nineteen or twenty for all of his uniform, jump back to escape being run down. At the same moment the roan swerved, and its rider caught a glimpse of the aroused men by the house. Some were springing from their horses, and he could see the ri-

fles going to their shoulders. He passed the kitchen door and the dried corpses swinging in the shade, compelling his foes to run around the front of the house. A rifle cracked, and a second, but he was going fast, leaning forward, low in the saddle, one hand clutching the shirt of apples, the other guiding the horse. ◀

The top bar of the fence was four feet high, but he knew his roan and leaped it at full career<sup>15</sup> to the accompaniment of several scattered shots. Eight hundred yards straight away were the woods, and the roan was covering the distance with mighty strides. Every man was now firing. They were pumping their guns so rapidly that he no longer heard individual shots. A bullet went through his hat, but he was unaware, though he did know when another tore through the apples on the pommel. And he winced and ducked even lower when a third bullet, fired low, struck a stone between his horse's legs and ricocheted off through the air, buzzing and humming like some incredible insect.

The shots died down as the magazines were emptied, until, quickly, there was no more shooting. The young man was elated. Through that astonishing fusillade he had come unscathed. He glanced back. Yes, they had emptied their magazines. He could see several reloading. Others were running back behind the house for their horses. As he looked, two, already mounted, came back into view around the corner, riding hard. And at the same moment, he saw the man with the unmistakable ginger beard kneel down on the ground, level his gun, and coolly take his time for the long shot.

The young man threw his spurs into the

**25** horse, crouched very low, and swerved in his flight in order to distract the other's aim. And still the shot did not come. With each jump of

**19**

*What are the stains? What significance might they have for the soldier?* Bloodstains on floor may remind soldier of brutality of war and the suffering it causes.

**20**

Provisioning soldiers is a major problem in wartime; soldiers pilage in part because they need food.

**21**

Party which has ridden in is the enemy.

**22**

Conflict. Direct encounter with the enemy.

**23**

Scout assumes he has escaped because men have exhausted their ammunition and must pause to reload as he gallops away at full speed.

**24**

Suspense. As scout gallops toward safety, sharpshooter steadies his aim.

**25**

As precaution, scout takes evasive action and swerves horse against another possible shot.

14. **earnest**: a pledge; an assurance.

15. **at full career**: at full speed.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to outline the plot of Jack London's "War." (You may want to draw a plot line on the board and write events on the line as students suggest them.) Next, ask how the events in the story are ironic.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

London's story may motivate some students to learn about real-life war stories from older family members or friends. Assign students to gather such stories from interviews and to share their findings with the class.

26

**Climax.** Final irony of story is that man whose life he spared earlier kills him.

### READING CHECK

1. Toward the north (p. 39).
2. Enemy soldier (p. 42).
3. Clips, empty cartridges, graves, hanging bodies (p. 42).
4. Enemy soldiers ride up (p. 43).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Find enemy and make report. 1b. Has no companionship.
2. Responses will vary. Perhaps he takes pity on enemy; reacts to person-to-person contact.
3. Whether a soldier lives or dies has no bearing on his goodness or mercy; the ruthless may survive.
4. Responses will vary. London wants readers to see this incident as universal. Countless young men are just as mercilessly killed in war.

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. The irony in the story emphasizes the impersonal nature of war. Glad for some kind of personal contact, the scout does not shoot the man at the stream. Later, however, the same man shoots scout as part of his role in war, thinking of the scout not as a person but as an enemy. By not adhering to the impersonal code of conduct in the war, the scout brings about his own death. It is also ironic that the man does not even realize that the scout had spared his life, suggesting impersonal nature of war; people often do not realize the effects they have on others' lives.

the horse, the woods sprang nearer. They were only two hundred yards away, and still the shot was delayed.

- 26 And then he heard it, the last thing he was to hear, for he was dead ere he hit the ground in the long crashing fall from the saddle. And they, watching at the house, saw him fall, saw his body bounce when it struck the earth, and saw the burst of red-cheeked apples that rolled about him. They laughed at the unexpected eruption of apples, and clapped their hands in applause of the long shot by the man with the ginger beard.

### Reading Check

1. At the opening of the story, in what direction is the young cavalryman moving?
2. What does he see at the edge of the stream?
3. What evidence does he find that a battle has been fought at the deserted farmhouse?
4. Why is he forced to try a desperate escape?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

- 1a. What is the young cavalryman's quest?  
b. In what way is his task more fearful than being in the midst of battle?
2. Why do you think the soldier decides not to shoot the man with the ginger-colored beard?
3. The young cavalryman is killed by the very man he spared earlier in the story. What does this ironic ending suggest about the nature of war?
4. Why do you suppose London does not identify his young soldier by name?

## Literary Elements

### Irony of Situation

**Irony of situation** occurs when a character's actions bring about unexpected results. The young cavalryman in London's story spares the life of the man he sees at the stream. Ironically, he is killed by that very man.

Irony is a powerful element in literature because it enables an author to suggest a great deal without commenting directly on characters and actions. How does the irony in London's story give the events universal significance?

The 1981 Australian film *Gallipoli* and the 1982 German film *The Boat* are strong anti-war statements. Both are available on videocassette. You may invite very mature students to see one or both of the movies and write short essays about how these films compare with London's

story in their depictions of war.

Students who have an interest in music may be interested in writing a ballad or some other form of song, using the same story line, characters, theme, and setting that are found in "War."

Interested students should be encouraged to read more of London's work, such as the novels *The Call of the Wild* and *White Fang* or other London short stories.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Word Origins

When we hear the word *magazine*, we usually think of a periodical like *Time* or *Family Circle*, which contains various articles and photographs. But *magazine* is also a military term meaning "a place to store ammunition or explosives." In this story, it refers to a clip or a small metal container for cartridges, which is inserted into a rifle.

- 1 What can you find out about the origins and meanings of these terms?

carbine	cavalry	fusillade
cartridge	clip	

- 2 Which of these words also have meanings *not* directly associated with the military?

## Writing About Literature

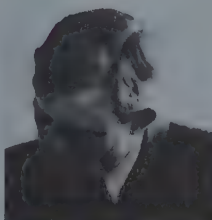
### ▶ Reacting to Anonymity

Jack London does not name any of the characters or places in this story although he gives very careful descriptions of the figures and the setting. Is there a purpose in this anonymity? Do you think it is an effective device? Write a short essay discussing your reactions. If you wish, refer to other selections that make use of a similar kind of anonymity (*The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane, for example).

- ▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## About the Author

### Jack London (1876–1916)



Born in poverty in San Francisco, Jack London worked for ten cents an hour in a cannery as soon as he graduated from grammar school. By the time he published his first book at the age of twenty-four, he had been a hobo, a longshoreman, an oyster pirate, a seaman, and a gold prospector in Alaska. He had also been in jail twice—once for vagrancy in New York and once for speaking at a socialist meeting in California. London's participation in the gold rush to the Klondike in 1896 paid off—not in gold, but in material for stories. London soon became one of the most highly paid writers in the United States. Disciplined to write a thousand words a day, he turned out popular adventure fiction, such as the famous story "To Build a Fire" and the best-selling novel *The Call of the Wild*. London's fiction was realistic and often portrayed people locked in a grim struggle for survival.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Carbine:** from French *cara-bine*, meaning "mounted rifleman." Originally from *escarabin*, a word used to describe archers from Flanders. Present-day meaning is "a short-barreled rifle."

**Cartridge:** cylindrical case made of metal or cardboard that contains the bullet or shell of a firearm.

**Cavalry:** from French *cavalerie*. Formerly referred to troops on horses. Now often used for combat troops in armored vehicles.

**Clip:** from Middle English *clipper*, meaning "to embrace." A clip is a metal container for cartridges.

**Fusillade:** from French *fusiller*, meaning "to shoot." Rapid and continuous shooting.

2. **Cartridge, cavalry, and clip** also have nonmilitary meanings.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Students may disagree about the effectiveness of anonymity as a literary device, but most will understand its purpose—to make a specific event represent the universal. Unable to link the characters or setting of "War" to a particular incident, readers must apply the lesson of the story to their own experience or understanding of war.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jack London was raised by his mother, a self-styled spiritualist. Instability characterized his childhood as well as his young adulthood since in his early years he and his mother had no real home. London's other works include *South Sea Tales*, *The Sea Wolf*, and *White Fang*.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to trace **plot** and identify relevant details concerning actions, **characters**, and events in "The Musgrave Ritual." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the character of Sherlock Holmes, who is famous for his deductive reasoning powers. He first gathers the evidence and then draws logical inferences from that evidence. As students read the story, ask them to collect the facts about the crime and match their wits against those of Sherlock Holmes.

## The Musgrave Ritual

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **plot** and **character** in the selection.

1

**Characterization.** Opening comments characterize Holmes as problem-solving genius; Watson praises Holmes's methods of thought but scoffs at his sloppy habits.

2

Use to answer study question 1a, p. 61.

3

Watson, a bit sloppy himself, nevertheless feels superior to Holmes when it comes to orderliness.

4

Obviously wall peppered with bullet holes will not enhance appearance of room.

5

**Characterization.** Part of the magic of Holmes comes from fact that he is strange and erratic in his personal behavior—often taken as sign of creative genius.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on pp. 61–62 will give students practice in finding the appropriate meaning, in context, of words which have more than one meaning.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

To encourage students to use close observation, bring a variety of pictures to class and ask students to tell you as much as they can about the people or circumstances in the pictures from various clues.

# The Musgrave Ritual

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

*In this story from The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, Holmes recalls one of his earliest cases, involving a strange ceremony. Note how he uses his famous powers of deductive reasoning to unravel the mystery.*

1 An anomaly<sup>1</sup> which often struck me in the character of my friend Sherlock Holmes was

2 that, although in his methods of thought he was the neatest and most methodical of mankind, and although also he affected a certain quiet primness of dress, he was none the less in his personal habits one of the most untidy men that ever drove a fellow lodger to distraction.

Not that I am in the least conventional in that respect myself. The rough-and-tumble work in Afghanistan,<sup>2</sup> coming on the top of natural Bohemianism<sup>3</sup> of disposition, has made me rather more lax than befits a medical man. But with me there is a limit, and when I find a man who keeps his cigars in the coal scuttle, his tobacco in the toe end of a Persian slipper, and his unanswered correspondence transfixed by a jackknife into the very center of his wooden

3 mantelpiece, then I begin to give myself virtuous airs. I have always held, too, that pistol practice should be distinctly an open-air pas-

1. **anomaly** (ə-nŏm'ə-lē): unusual or irregular quality or characteristic.

2. **Afghanistan:** Before his association with Holmes, Watson had served in the British army.

3. **Bohemianism** (bŏ-hē'mē-ən-izm'): unconventional behavior.

time; and when Holmes, in one of his queer humors, would sit in an armchair with his hair-trigger and a hundred Boxer cartridges and proceed to adorn the opposite wall with a patriotic V. R.<sup>4</sup> done in bullet-pocks, I felt strongly that neither the atmosphere nor the appearance of our room was improved by it.

5 Our chambers were always full of chemicals and of criminal relics which had a way of wandering into unlikely positions, and of turning up in the butter dish or in even less desirable places. But his papers were my great crux. He had a horror of destroying documents, especially those which were connected with his past cases, and yet it was only once in every year or two that he would muster energy to docket and arrange them; for, as I have mentioned somewhere in these incoherent memoirs, the outbursts of passionate energy when he performed the remarkable feats with which his name is associated were followed by reactions of lethargy during which he would lie about with his violin and his books, hardly moving

4. **V. R.:** The initials stand for *Victoria Regina* (*Queen Victoria*). Victoria reigned in England from 1837 to 1901.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 4 / Selection Test 4 / Reading Check 4 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 4



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Sherlock Holmes tells his friend Watson how he once solved the riddle of the Musgrave family ritual and the mystery surrounding the disappearances of the butler and a maid at the Musgrave estate. Reginald Musgrave tells

Holmes that he dismissed Brunton, the butler, after catching him looking at a copy of the family ritual, a riddle verse. Brunton suddenly disappeared. Three days later one of the maids also disappeared. What does Holmes suspect? What will be his first step toward solving the mystery?

## PRESENTATION

Tell students that as they read "The Musgrave Ritual," they should pay particular attention to the descriptions of people and to the possible motives behind their actions. Have students consider the personality of Sherlock Holmes as

save from the sofa to the table. Thus month after month his papers accumulated until every corner of the room was stacked with bundles of manuscript which were on no account to be burned, and which could not be put away save by their owner. One winter's night, as we sat together by the fire, I ventured to suggest to him that, as he had finished pasting extracts into his commonplace book,<sup>5</sup> he might employ the next two hours in making our room a little more habitable. He could not deny the justice of my request, so with a rather rueful face he went off to his bedroom, from  
6 which he returned presently pulling a large tin box behind him. This he placed in the middle of the floor, and, squatting down upon a stool in front of it, he threw back the lid. I could see that it was already a third full of bundles of paper tied up with red tape into separate packages.

"There are cases enough here, Watson," said he, looking at me with mischievous eyes. "I  
7 think that if you knew all that I had in this box you would ask me to pull some out instead of putting others in."

"These are the records of your early work, then?" I asked. "I have often wished that I had notes of those cases."

"Yes, my boy, these were all done  
8 prematurely before my biographer had come to glorify me." He lifted bundle after bundle in a  
10 tender, caressing sort of way. "They are not all successes, Watson," said he. "But there are some pretty little problems among them. Here's the record of the Tarleton murders, and the case of Vamberry, the wine merchant,  
11 and the adventure of the old Russian woman, and the singular affair of the aluminum crutch, as well as a full account of Ricoletti of the clubfoot, and his abominable wife. And

here—ah, now, this really is something a little *recherché*."<sup>6</sup>

He dived his arm down to the bottom of the chest and brought up a small wooden box with a sliding lid such as children's toys are kept in.  
9 From within he produced a crumpled piece of paper, an old-fashioned brass key, a peg of wood with a ball of string attached to it, and three rusty old discs of metal.

"Well, my boy, what do you make of this lot?" he asked, smiling at my expression.

"It is a curious collection."

"Very curious, and the story that hangs round it will strike you as being more curious still."

"These relics have a history, then?"

"So much so that they *are* history."

"What do you mean by that?"

Sherlock Holmes picked them up one by one and laid them along the edge of the table. Then he reseated himself in his chair and looked them over with a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes.

"These," said he, "are all that I have left to remind me of the adventure of the Musgrave Ritual."

I had heard him mention the case more than once, though I had never been able to gather the details. "I should be so glad," said I, "if you would give me an account of it."

"And leave the litter as it is?" he cried mischievously. "Your tidiness won't bear much strain, after all, Watson. But I should be glad that you should add this case to your annals, for there are points in it which make it quite unique in the criminal records of this or, I believe, of any other country. A collection of my trifling achievements would certainly be incomplete which contained no account of this very singular business."

"You may remember how the affair of the

6 Holmes's response to Watson's request that he clean up a little is to drag out a box of material that has already been put in order.

7 Holmes is tantalizing Watson by suggesting that box contains some very interesting material.

8 *Who is Holmes's biographer?* Watson, the first-person narrator.

9 *Plot.* List of items sets stage for telling of the "uncommon" story.

10 *What does this question suggest Holmes wants to do?* Tell story in exchange for Watson's overlooking mess.

11 Holmes tells Watson that story about to be told should be recorded because of its uniqueness.

5. **commonplace book:** a journal containing passages for reference and personal comments.

6. *recherché* (rə-shâr'shâ'): uncommon; choice.

described by Watson at the beginning of the story. Watson says that Holmes is neat in methods of thought and in dress but not in personal habits. He also reveals something of Holmes's modesty and mischievous sense of humor. You may want to point out additional aspects of

Holmes's personality that are revealed in other stories, such as his abrupt manner, masterful violin playing, and knowledge of many obscure sciences.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Relating Expression Skills

Here Holmes and Watson are shown looking through a trunk full of notes on Holmes's previous cases. You might consider bringing a miniature trunk to class full of miscellaneous items (notes with cryptic messages, pieces of string, an old shoe, a chipped teacup, and so on). Arrange students in small groups and allow each group to select one item from the trunk. The group should then write its own mystery story in which the selected object provides the central clue. Groups may want to dramatize their mysteries and allow other students to solve the crimes.

12

**Characterization.** Holmes elaborates on his past and his profession. His tone suggests pride in his accomplishments.

13

"Official force" refers to London's police force, headquartered at Scotland Yard; "final court of appeal" used figuratively to mean "final authority."

14

"A Study in Scarlet" was Doyle's first story featuring Sherlock Holmes.

15

**What does Holmes suggest is behind his "genius" in solving cases?** Careful study.



All drawings for "The Musgrave Ritual" were originally done by Sidney Paget for the *Strand* magazine (1901–1905).

*Gloria Scott*,<sup>7</sup> and my conversation with the unhappy man whose fate I told you of, first turned my attention in the direction of the profession which has become my life's work.

12 You see me now when my name has become known far and wide, and when I am generally

13 recognized both by the public and by the official force as being a final court of appeal in doubtful cases. Even when you knew me first,

14 at the time of the affair which you have commemorated in 'A Study in Scarlet,' I had already established a considerable, though not a

15 very lucrative, connection. You can hardly realize, then, how difficult I found it at first, and how long I had to wait before I succeeded in making any headway.

"When I first came up to London I had rooms in Montague Street, just round the corner from the British Museum, and there I waited, filling in my too abundant leisure time by studying all those branches of science which might make me more efficient. Now and again cases came in my way, principally through the introduction of old fellow students, for during my last years at the university there was a good deal of talk there about myself and my meth-

7. *Gloria Scott*: a ship that figures in Holmes's first case.

ods. The third of these cases was that of the  
16 Musgrave Ritual, and it is to the interest which  
was aroused by that singular chain of events, 20  
and the large issues which proved to be at  
stake, that I trace my first stride towards the  
position which I now hold.

17 "Reginald Musgrave had been in the same  
college as myself, and I had some slight ac-  
quaintance with him. He was not generally 21  
popular among the undergraduates, though it  
always seemed to me that what was set down as

18 pride was really an attempt to cover extreme  
natural diffidence. In appearance he was a  
man of an exceedingly aristocratic type, thin,  
high-nosed, and large-eyed, with languid and  
yet courtly manners. He was indeed a scion of  
one of the very oldest families in the kingdom,  
though his branch was a cadet one<sup>8</sup> which had 22  
separated from the northern Musgraves some  
time in the sixteenth century and had estab-  
lished itself in western Sussex, where the  
Manor House of Hurlstone is perhaps the old-  
est inhabited building in the county. Some-  
thing of his birthplace seemed to cling to the  
man, and I never looked at his pale, keen face  
or the poise of his head without associating  
him with gray archways and mullioned win-  
dows<sup>9</sup> and all the venerable wreckage of a feu-  
dal keep.<sup>10</sup> Once or twice we drifted into talk,  
and I can remember that more than once he  
19 expressed a keen interest in my methods of ob-  
servation and inference.

"For four years I had seen nothing of him  
until one morning he walked into my room in  
Montague Street. He had changed little, was  
dressed like a young man of fashion—he was  
always a bit of a dandy—and preserved the  
same quiet, suave manner which had formerly  
distinguished him.

8. **cadet one**: a younger branch of the family.

9. **mullioned** (mūl'yənd) **windows**: windows with verti-  
cal strips dividing the panes.

10. **feudal keep**: a medieval fortress.

"How has all gone with you, Musgrave?" I  
asked after we had cordially shaken hands.

"You probably heard of my poor father's  
death," said he; 'he was carried off about two  
years ago. Since then I have of course had the  
Hurlstone estate to manage, and as I am mem-  
ber for my district<sup>11</sup> as well, my life has been a  
busy one. But I understand, Holmes, that you  
are turning to practical ends those powers with  
which you used to amaze us?'

"Yes," said I, 'I have taken to living by my  
wits.'

"I am delighted to hear it, for your advice at  
present would be exceedingly valuable to me.  
We have had some very strange doings at  
Hurlstone, and the police have been able to  
throw no light upon the matter. It is really the  
most extraordinary and inexplicable busi-  
ness.'

"You can imagine with what eagerness I lis-  
tened to him, Watson, for the very chance for  
which I had been panting during all those  
months of inaction seemed to have come  
within my reach. In my inmost heart I believed  
that I could succeed where others failed, and  
now I had the opportunity to test myself.

"Pray let me have the details," I cried.

"Reginald Musgrave sat down opposite to  
me and lit the cigarette which I had pushed to-  
wards him.

"You must know," said he, 'that though I am  
a bachelor, I have to keep up a considerable  
staff of servants at Hurlstone, for it is a ram-  
bling old place and takes a good deal of look-  
ing after. I preserve,<sup>12</sup> too, and in the pheasant  
months I usually have a house party, so that it  
would not do to be short-handed. Altogether  
there are eight maids, the cook, the butler, two  
footmen, and a boy. The garden and the sta-  
bles of course have a separate staff.

11. **member . . . district**: a representative in Parliament.

12. **preserve**: here, maintain game for hunting.

16

Holmes credits interest in Mus-  
grave case and his success in  
solving it as helping to establish  
his reputation.

17

**Exposition.** This is point at which  
**framework story** ends and back-  
ground of inner story begins.

18

*What does Holmes think is the  
reason for Reginald Mus-  
grave's proud demeanor?* He is  
trying to cover his lack of self-  
confidence.

19

Reader is constantly reminded  
that Holmes is outstanding be-  
cause of his "methods of obser-  
vation and inference."

20

Dialogue between Holmes and  
Musgrave is quote within quote,  
signified by single quotation  
marks.

21

Musgrave suggests that Holmes  
now uses his "powers" to make  
money rather than to entertain  
friends.

22

Again reader is reminded how  
difficult this case will be to solve  
and how "extraordinary" it is.



23

**Characterization.** Brunton is established as having extraordinary abilities—a worthy match for Holmes's wits.

24

Details about women in Brunton's life suggest woman will be involved in mystery.

25

**Brain fever:** encephalitis, inflammation of brain; characterized by drowsiness; sometimes referred to as "sleeping sickness."

26

**Plot.** Circumstances leading to Musgrave's discovery of Brunton in library established; without logical explanation, discovery might seem unrealistic.

27

**Suspense.** Hint of physical danger creates tension.

28

Fact that Brunton is fully dressed underscores oddity of this behavior.

"Of these servants the one who had been longest in our service was Brunton, the butler. He was a young schoolmaster out of place when he was first taken up by my father, but he was a man of great energy and character, and he soon became quite invaluable in the household. He was a well-grown, handsome man, with a splendid forehead, and though he has been with us for twenty years he cannot be more than forty now. With his personal advantages and his extraordinary gifts—for he can speak several languages and play nearly every musical instrument—it is wonderful that he should have been satisfied so long in such a position, but I suppose that he was comfortable and lacked energy to make any change. The butler of Hurlstone is always a thing that is remembered by all who visit us.

"But this paragon has one fault. He is a bit of a Don Juan,<sup>13</sup> and you can imagine that for a man like him it is not a very difficult part to play in a quiet country district. When he was married it was all right, but since he has been a widower we have had no end of trouble with him. A few months ago we were in hopes that he was about to settle down again, for he became engaged to Rachel Howells, our second housemaid; but he has thrown her over since then and taken up with Janet Tregellis, the daughter of the head gamekeeper. Rachel—who is a very good girl, but of an excitable Welsh temperament—had a sharp touch of brain fever and goes about the house now—or did until yesterday—like a black-eyed shadow of her former self. That was our first drama at Hurlstone; but a second one came to drive it from our minds, and it was prefaced by the disgrace and dismissal of butler Brunton.

"This was how it came about. I have said that the man was intelligent, and this very intelligence has caused his ruin, for it seems to

have led to an insatiable curiosity about things which did not in the least concern him. I had no idea of the lengths to which this would carry him until the merest accident opened my eyes to it.

"I have said that the house is a rambling one. One day last week—on Thursday night, to be more exact—I found that I could not sleep, having foolishly taken a cup of strong *café noir*<sup>14</sup> after my dinner. After struggling against it until two in the morning, I felt that it was quite hopeless, so I rose and lit the candle with the intention of continuing a novel which I was reading. The book, however, had been left in the billiard room, so I pulled on my dressing gown and started off to get it.

"In order to reach the billiard room I had to descend a flight of stairs and then to cross the head of a passage which led to the library and the gun room. You can imagine my surprise when, as I looked down this corridor, I saw a glimmer of light coming from the open door of the library. I had myself extinguished the lamp and closed the door before coming to bed. Naturally my first thought was of burglars. The corridors at Hurlstone have their walls largely decorated with trophies of old weapons. From one of these I picked a battle-axe, and then, leaving my candle behind me, I crept on tiptoe down the passage and peeped in at the open door.

"Brunton, the butler, was in the library. He was sitting, fully dressed, in an easy chair, with a slip of paper which looked like a map upon his knee, and his forehead sunk forward upon his hand in deep thought. I stood dumb with astonishment, watching him from the darkness. A small taper on the edge of the table shed a feeble light which sufficed to show me that he was fully dressed. Suddenly, as I looked, he rose from his chair, and, walking

13. **Don Juan** (dōn'wān'): a legendary Spanish nobleman obsessed with the pursuit of women.

14. **café noir** (kā-fā' nwār'): black coffee.

over to a bureau at the side, he unlocked it and drew out one of the drawers. From this he took a paper, and, returning to his seat, he flattened it out beside the taper on the edge of the table and began to study it with minute attention.



My indignation at this calm examination of our family documents overcame me so far that I took a step forward, and Brunton, looking up, saw me standing in the doorway. He sprang to his feet, his face turned livid with fear, and he thrust into his breast the chartlike paper which he had been originally studying.

29 ““Sol!” said I. “This is how you repay the trust which we have reposed in you. You will leave my service tomorrow.”

“He bowed with the look of a man who is utterly crushed and slunk past me without a word. The taper was still on the table, and by its light I glanced to see what the paper was which Brunton had taken from the bureau. To my surprise it was nothing of any importance at all, but simply a copy of the questions and answers in the singular old observance called the Musgrave Ritual. It is a sort of ceremony peculiar to our family, which each Musgrave for centuries past has gone through on his coming of age—a thing of private interest, and perhaps of some little importance to the archæologist, like our own blazonings and charges,<sup>15</sup> but of no practical use whatever.”

30 31 32 ““We had better come back to the paper afterwards,” said I.

“‘If you think it really necessary,’ he answered with some hesitation. ‘To continue my statement, however: I relocked the bureau, using the key which Brunton had left, and I had turned to go when I was surprised to find that the butler had returned, and was standing before me.

33 ““Mr. Musgrave, sir,” he cried in a voice which was hoarse with emotion, “I can’t bear disgrace, sir. I’ve always been proud above my station in life, and disgrace would kill me. My blood will be on your head, sir—it will, indeed—if you drive me to despair. If you cannot keep me after what has passed, then for

15. **blazonings and charges:** descriptions of coats of arms and heraldic emblems.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to speculate on Musgrave’s decision to dismiss his butler Brunton. Was the dismissal an appropriate action to take? Did Musgrave act hastily? Was he too severe? What alternative did Musgrave have? Request that students answer these questions in a paragraph, providing reasons for their opinions.

### 29

Severity of punishment might seem extreme in contemporary times, but violation of trust by member of serving class was considered to be serious matter at turn of the century in class-conscious England.

### 30

Ritual serves as rite of passage, an activity adolescents perform in some societies when they reach puberty; signifies passage from childhood to adulthood.

### 31

Irony. Musgrave says piece of paper cannot have any “practical use whatever,” yet it will be clue upon which Holmes bases his deductions.

### 32

Holmes immediately recognizes paper as being important to case, yet he must have all information that Musgrave can supply.

### 33

*Why are three sets of quotation marks necessary here?* Signify that Watson is quoting Holmes who is quoting Musgrave who is quoting Brunton.

34

Brunton carries out his duties well; Musgrave wonders what excuse for leaving Brunton will use.

35

Rachel Howells has been identified as former fiancé of Brunton; numerous details about her suggest her involvement in mystery.

36

**Suspense.** Maid's strange response intensifies reader's curiosity about situation.

37

**Suspense.** Clues suggest Brunton has not really left house.

38

**Labyrinth:** a maze or intricate structure in which one could easily become lost.

39

**How does "rain" provide a clue that Brunton has not left the house?** Responses will vary. His footprints should be visible in mud.

God's sake let me give you notice and leave in a month, as if of my own free will. I could stand that, Mr. Musgrave, but not to be cast out before all the folk that I know so well."

" "You don't deserve much consideration, Brunton," I answered. "Your conduct has been most infamous. However, as you have been a long time in the family, I have no wish to bring public disgrace upon you. A month, however, is too long. Take yourself away in a week, and give what reason you like for going."

" "Only a week, sir?" he cried in a despairing voice. "A fortnight<sup>16</sup>—say at least a fortnight!"

" "A week," I repeated, "and you may consider yourself to have been very leniently dealt with."

"He crept away, his face sunk upon his breast, like a broken man, while I put out the light and returned to my room.

"For two days after this Brunton was most assiduous in his attention to his duties. I made no allusion to what had passed and waited with some curiosity to see how he would cover his disgrace. On the third morning, however, he did not appear, as was his custom, after breakfast to receive my instructions for the day. As I left the dining room I happened to meet Rachel Howells, the maid. I have told you that she had only recently recovered from an illness and was looking so wretchedly pale and wan that I remonstrated<sup>17</sup> with her for being at work.

" "You should be in bed," I said. "Come back to your duties when you are stronger."

"She looked at me with so strange an expression that I began to suspect that her brain was affected.

" "I am strong enough, Mr. Musgrave," said she.

16. **fortnight:** two weeks.

17. **remonstrated** (rī'mōn-strāt'əd): argued or made protest.

" "We will see what the doctor says," I answered. "You must stop work now, and when you go downstairs just say that I wish to see Brunton."

" "The butler is gone," said she.

" "Gone! Gone where?"

" "He is gone. No one has seen him. He is not in his room. Oh, yes, he is gone, he is gone!" She fell back against the wall with shriek after shriek of laughter, while I, horrified at this sudden hysterical attack, rushed to the bell to summon help. The girl was taken to her room, still screaming and sobbing, while I made inquiries about Brunton. There was no doubt about it that he had disappeared. His bed had not been slept in, he had been seen by no one since he had retired to his room the night before, and yet it was difficult to see how he could have left the house, as both windows and doors were found to be fastened in the morning. His clothes, his watch, and even his money were in his room, but the black suit which he usually wore was missing. His slippers, too, were gone, but his boots<sup>18</sup> were left behind. Where then could butler Brunton have gone in the night, and what could have become of him now?

" "Of course we searched the house from cellar to garret, but there was no trace of him. It is, as I have said, a labyrinth of an old house, especially the original wing, which is now practically uninhabited; but we ransacked every room and cellar without discovering the least sign of the missing man. It was incredible to me that he could have gone away leaving all his property behind him, and yet where could he be? I called in the local police, but without success. Rain had fallen on the night before, and we examined the lawn and the paths all round the house, but in vain. Matters were in this state, when a new development quite drew our

18. **boots:** shoes.



attention away from the original mystery.

“For two days Rachel Howells had been so ill, sometimes delirious, sometimes hysterical, that a nurse had been employed to sit up with her at night. On the third night after Brunton’s disappearance, the nurse, finding her patient 43 sleeping nicely, had dropped into a nap in the armchair, when she woke in the early morning to find the bed empty, the window open, and no signs of the invalid. I was instantly aroused, and, with the two footmen, started off at once 44 in search of the missing girl. It was not difficult to tell the direction which she had taken, for, 40 starting from under her window, we could follow her footmarks easily across the lawn to the edge of the mere,<sup>19</sup> where they vanished close to the gravel path which leads out of the grounds. The lake there is eight feet deep, and you can imagine our feelings when we saw that 41 the trail of the poor demented girl came to an end at the edge of it.

“Of course, we had the drags at once and set to work to recover the remains, but no trace of the body could we find. On the other hand, we brought to the surface an object of a most unexpected kind. It was a linen bag which contained within it a mass of old rusted and discolored metal and several dull-colored pieces of pebble or glass. This strange find was all that we could get from the mere, and, although we made every possible search and inquiry yesterday, we know nothing of the fate either of Rachel Howells or of Richard Brunton. The county police are at their wits’ end, and I have come up to you as a last resource.’

42 “You can imagine, Watson, with what eagerness I listened to this extraordinary sequence of events, and endeavored to piece them together, and to devise some common thread upon which they might all hang. The butler was gone. The maid was gone. The maid had

loved the butler, but had afterwards had cause to hate him. She was of Welsh blood, fiery and passionate. She had been terribly excited immediately after his disappearance. She had flung into the lake a bag containing some curious contents. These were all factors which had to be taken into consideration, and yet none of them got quite to the heart of the matter. What was the starting point of this chain of events? There lay the end of this tangled line.

“‘I must see that paper, Musgrave,’ said I, ‘which this butler of yours thought it worth his while to consult, even at the risk of the loss of his place.’

“‘It is rather an absurd business, this ritual of ours,’ he answered. ‘But it has at least the saving grace of antiquity to excuse it. I have a copy of the questions and answers here if you care to run your eye over them.’

“‘He handed me the very paper which I have here, Watson, and this is the strange catechism<sup>20</sup> to which each Musgrave had to submit when he came to man’s estate. I will read you the questions and answers as they stand.

45 “‘Whose was it?’

“‘His who is gone.’

“‘Who shall have it?’

“‘He who will come.’

“‘Where was the sun?’

“‘Over the oak.’

“‘Where was the shadow?’

“‘Under the elm.’

“‘How was it stepped?’

“‘North by ten and by ten, east by five and by five, south by two and by two, west by one and by one, and so under.’

“‘What shall we give for it?’

“‘All that is ours.’

“‘Why should we give it?’

“‘For the sake of the trust.’

“‘The original has no date, but is in the

40

That Rachel’s “footmarks” were easily followed underscores oddity of absence of Brunton’s.

41

*What does evidence indicate?* Responses will vary. May indicate maid has drowned herself, yet such an occurrence would not explain her prominence so far in story.

42

Holmes interrupts his relaying of Musgrave’s words to comment to Watson on his own reactions to the mystery, reminding readers this is a story within a story.

43

*Suspense.* At this point, Holmes is not sure what crimes have been committed nor the motivation for crimes.

44

*Plot.* Holmes now begins to lay out pieces of puzzle. He has correctly determined that starting point in solving mystery is riddle associated with ritual.

45

Riddle is befuddling to readers, serves to heighten curiosity.

19. **mere:** pond, lake.

20. **catechism** (kāt’ə-kīz’əm): a series of questions and answers, used for instruction.

46

As English language evolves, certain characteristics change; variations in spelling were more pronounced before dictionaries helped to establish standard spelling.

47

**Characterization.** Musgrave's failure to see importance of riddle contrasts with Holmes's insight. Holmes makes connection between riddle and disappearances.

48

**What does Holmes imply with his veiled insult?** Generations of Musgraves have overlooked importance of riddle; butler is smarter because he understands its significance.

49

**Lintel:** piece of timber over door or window that serves as support for wall above it.

50

**Rising action.** Fact that butler might gain "personal advantage" clues reader to monetary value of "secret."

46 spelling of the middle of the seventeenth century,' remarked Musgrave. 'I am afraid, however, that it can be of little help to you in 49 solving this mystery.'

"At least,' said I, 'it gives us another mystery, and one which is even more interesting than the first. It may be that the solution of the one may prove to be the solution of the other.

48 You will excuse me, Musgrave, if I say that your butler appears to me to have been a very clever man, and to have had a clearer insight than ten generations of his masters.'

"I hardly follow you,' said Musgrave. 'The paper seems to me to be of no practical importance.'

"But to me it seems immensely practical, and I fancy that Brunton took the same view. He had probably seen it before that night on which you caught him.'

"It is very possible. We took no pains to hide it.'

"He simply wished, I should imagine, to refresh his memory upon that last occasion. He 50 had, as I understand, some sort of map or chart which he was comparing with the manuscript, and which he thrust into his pocket when you appeared.'

"That is true. But what could he have to do with this old family custom of ours, and what does this rigmarole<sup>21</sup> mean?'

"I don't think that we should have much difficulty in determining that,' said I; 'with your permission we will take the first train down to Sussex and go a little more deeply into the matter upon the spot.'

"The same afternoon saw us both at Hurlstone. Possibly you have seen pictures and read descriptions of the famous old building, so I will confine my account of it to saying that it is built in the shape of an L, the long arm being the more modern portion, and the

shorter the ancient nucleus from which the other has developed. Over the low, heavy-lintelled door, in the center of this old part, is chiseled the date, 1607, but experts are agreed that the beams and stonework are really much older than this. The enormously thick walls and tiny windows of this part had in the last century driven the family into building the new wing, and the old one was used now as a storehouse and a cellar, when it was used at all. A splendid park with fine old timber surrounds the house, and the lake, to which my client had referred, lay close to the avenue, about two hundred yards from the building.

"I was already firmly convinced, Watson, that there were not three separate mysteries here, but one only, and that if I could read the Musgrave Ritual aright I should hold in my hand the clue which would lead me to the truth concerning both the butler Brunton and the maid Howells. To that then I turned all my energies. Why should this servant be so anxious to master this old formula? Evidently because he saw something in it which had escaped all those generations of country squires, and from which he expected some personal advantage. What was it then, and how had it affected his fate?

"It was perfectly obvious to me, on reading the Ritual, that the measurements must refer to some spot to which the rest of the document alluded, and that if we could find that spot we should be in a fair way towards finding what the secret was which the old Musgraves had thought it necessary to embalm in so curious a fashion. There were two guides given us to start with, an oak and an elm. As to the oak there could be no question at all. Right in front of the house, upon the lefthand side of the drive, there stood a patriarch among oaks, one of the most magnificent trees that I have ever seen.

"That was there when your Ritual was

21. **rigmarole** (rīg'mā-rōl): nonsense.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Relating Expression Skills

Sydney Paget was an illustrator for both American and English magazines at the turn of the twentieth century. In this illustration, Paget depicts one form of transportation from that era. Have students construct models or draw pictures of other forms of transportation from the past or have them use their imaginations to create models or drawings of possible forms of transportation in the future.

drawn up,' said I as we drove past it.

"'It was there at the Norman Conquest<sup>22</sup> in all probability,' he answered. 'It has a girth of twenty-three feet.'

22. **Norman Conquest:** an important event in English history. In 1066, William the Conqueror and the Normans, from Normandy in France, invaded and conquered England.

51 "Here was one of my fixed points secured.

"'Have you any old elms?' I asked.

52 "'There used to be a very old one over yonder, but it was struck by lightning ten years ago, and we cut down the stump.'

"'You can see where it used to be?'

"'Oh, yes.'

"'There are no other elms?'

51

Holmes has taken first step in solving riddle by identifying oak.

52

**Complication.** Holmes must locate elm to which riddle referred.



53

Riddle referred to shadow of elm. Fact that shadow is no longer cast by elm presents a problem, but one that Holmes evidently overcomes.

54

Musgrave knows height because of childhood lessons in mathematics.

55

Plot. Establishes that Brunton too had reached this point in solving riddle.

56

Holmes was certain earlier that he was on "right road"; comment lets reader appreciate just how ingenious he is.

57

Characterization. Although calculation is simple, defining problem and devising method to solve it illustrate Holmes's brilliance.

"No old ones, but plenty of beeches.'

"I should like to see where it grew.'

"We had driven up in a dogcart,<sup>23</sup> and my client led me away at once, without our entering the house, to the scar on the lawn where the elm had stood. It was nearly midway between the oak and the house. My investigation seemed to be progressing.

53 "I suppose it is impossible to find out how high the elm was?' I asked.

"I can give you it at once. It was sixty-four feet.'

"How do you come to know it?' I asked in surprise.

54 "When my old tutor used to give me an exercise in trigonometry,<sup>24</sup> it always took the shape of measuring heights. When I was a lad I worked out every tree and building in the estate.'

"This was an unexpected piece of luck. My data were coming more quickly than I could have reasonably hoped.

"Tell me,' I asked, 'did your butler ever ask you such a question?'

"Reginald Musgrave looked at me in astonishment. 'Now that you call it to my mind,' he answered, 'Brunton *did* ask me about the height of the tree some months ago in connection with some little argument with the groom.'

56 "This was excellent news, Watson, for it showed me that I was on the right road. I looked up at the sun. It was low in the heavens, and I calculated that in less than an hour it would lie just above the topmost branches of the old oak. One condition mentioned in the Ritual would then be fulfilled. And the shadow of the elm must mean the farther end of the shadow, otherwise the trunk would have been

chosen as the guide. I had, then, to find where the far end of the shadow would fall when the sun was just clear of the oak."

"That must have been difficult, Holmes, when the elm was no longer there."

"Well, at least I knew that if Brunton could do it, I could also. Besides, there was no real difficulty. I went with Musgrave to his study and whittled myself this peg, to which I tied this long string with a knot at each yard. Then I took two lengths of a fishing rod, which came to just six feet, and I went back with my client to where the elm had been. The sun was just grazing the top of the oak. I fastened the rod on end, marked out the direction of the shadow, and measured it. It was nine feet in length.

57 "Of course the calculation now was a simple one. If a rod of six feet threw a shadow of nine, a tree of sixty-four feet would throw one of ninety-six, and the line of the one would of course be the line of the other. I measured out the distance, which brought me almost to the wall of the house, and I thrust a peg into the spot. You can imagine my exultation, Watson, when within two inches of my peg I saw a conical depression in the ground. I knew that it was the mark made by Brunton in his measurements, and that I was still upon his trail.

"From this starting point I proceeded to step, having first taken the cardinal points<sup>25</sup> by my pocket-compass. Ten steps with each foot took me along parallel with the wall of the house, and again I marked my spot with a peg. Then I carefully paced off five to the east and two to the south. It brought me to the very threshold of the old door. Two steps to the west meant now that I was to go two paces down the stone-flagged passage, and this was the place indicated by the Ritual.

"Never have I felt such a cold chill of disap-

23. **dogcart**: a small cart drawn by one horse.

24. **trigonometry** (trig'ə-nôm'ə-trē): a branch of mathematics applied in finding unknown sides and angles of triangles.

25. **cardinal points**: the points of the compass: north, south, east, and west.

58 pointment, Watson. For a moment it seemed to me that there must be some radical mistake in my calculations. The setting sun shone full upon the passage floor, and I could see that the old, footworn gray stones with which it was paved were firmly cemented together, and had certainly not been moved for many a long year. Brunton had not been at work here. I tapped upon the floor, but it sounded the same all over, and there was no sign of any crack or crevice. But, fortunately, Musgrave, who had begun to appreciate the meaning of my proceedings, and who was now as excited as myself, took out his manuscript to check my calculations.

59 “‘And under,’ he cried. ‘You have omitted the “and under.”’

60 “I had thought that it meant that we were to dig, but now, of course, I saw at once that I was wrong. ‘There is a cellar under this then?’ I cried.

“‘Yes, and as old as the house. Down here, through this door.’

“We went down a winding stone stair, and my companion, striking a match, lit a large lantern which stood on a barrel in the corner. In an instant it was obvious that we had at last come upon the true place, and that we had not been the only people to visit the spot recently.

61 “It had been used for the storage of wood, but the billets,<sup>26</sup> which had evidently been littered over the floor, were now piled at the sides, so as to leave a clear space in the middle. In this space lay a large and heavy flagstone with a rusted iron ring in the center to which a thick shepherd’s-check muffler was attached.

62 “‘By Jove!’ cried my client. ‘That’s Brunton’s muffler. I have seen it on him and could swear to it. What has the villain been doing here?’

63 “At my suggestion a couple of the county po-

lice were summoned to be present, and I then endeavored to raise the stone by pulling on the cravat.<sup>27</sup> I could only move it slightly, and it was with the aid of one of the constables that I succeeded at last in carrying it to one side. A black hole yawned beneath into which we all peered, while Musgrave, kneeling at the side, pushed down the lantern.

“A small chamber about seven feet deep and four feet square lay open to us. At one side of this was a squat, brass-bound wooden box, the lid of which was hinged upward, with this curious old-fashioned key projecting from the lock. It was furred outside by a thick layer of dust, and damp and worms had eaten through the wood, so that a crop of livid fungi was growing on the inside of it. Several discs of metal, old coins apparently, such as I hold here, were scattered over the bottom of the box, but it contained nothing else.

64 “At the moment, however, we had no thought for the old chest, for our eyes were riveted upon that which crouched beside it. It was the figure of a man, clad in a suit of black, who squatted down upon his hams with his forehead sunk upon the edge of the box and his two arms thrown out on each side of it. The attitude had drawn all the stagnant blood to the face, and no man could have recognized that distorted liver-colored countenance; but his height, his dress, and his hair were all sufficient to show my client, when we had drawn the body up, that it was indeed his missing butler. He had been dead some days, but there was no wound or bruise upon his person to show how he had met his dreadful end. When his body had been carried from the cellar we found ourselves still confronted with a problem which was almost as formidable as that with which we had started.

65 “I confess that so far, Watson, I had been

58

**Complication.** Following clues in ritual does not yet reveal solution to mystery.

59

**Has Holmes forgotten these words?** Has not forgotten, but has misinterpreted.

60

**Characterization.** Holmes is capable of freely admitting his errors, a characteristic that makes readers accept other claims about himself.

61

Holmes immediately notes signs that Brunton has preceded them in the search of the cellar.

62

**Flagstone:** stone used in paving walks and terraces.

63

**Why would Holmes send for policemen?** Probably as a precaution against further foul play; is aware that they are not only ones who know about location.

64

**Fungi:** one of large group of plants that includes mold and mushrooms.

65

**Suspense.** Though Brunton has been found, there is still no clue as to who else is involved, who robbed the Musgrave treasure.

26. **billets:** firewood cut in short, thick pieces.

27. **cravat** (krə-văt’): scarf.

66

**Complication.** Although mystery of ritual is solved, Holmes must now solve murder case.

67

Use to answer study question 4, p. 61.

68

Use to answer study question 3a, p. 61.

69

*What is Holmes suggesting when he comments on Brunton's intelligence?* Because Brunton's intelligence is closely matched with his, he can easily guess what Brunton was trying to do; it would take more effort to predict what a less intelligent person might do.

70

Holmes's guesses are completely based upon inference. They could never stand up in court of law, but they help solve mystery.

71

**Characterization.** Holmes has insightful knowledge of human nature in addition to knowledge of sciences.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Relating Expression Skills

This drawing depicts Holmes's reconstruction of the crime. The class might be interested in creating a large mural depicting impressions of several scenes in the story. Students also might enjoy recreating the story in comic-book form.

66 disappointed in my investigation. I had reckoned upon solving the matter when once I had found the place referred to in the Ritual; but now I was there, and was apparently as far as ever from knowing what it was which the family had concealed with such elaborate precautions. It is true that I had thrown a light upon the fate of Brunton, but now I had to ascertain how that fate had come upon him, and what part had been played in the matter by the



woman who had disappeared. I sat down upon a keg in the corner and thought the whole matter carefully over.

"You know my methods in such cases, Watson. I put myself in the man's place, and, having first gauged his intelligence, I try to imagine how I should myself have proceeded under the same circumstances. In this case the matter was simplified by Brunton's intelligence being quite first-rate, so that it was unnecessary to make any allowance for the personal equation,<sup>28</sup> as the astronomers have dubbed it. He knew that something valuable was concealed. He had spotted the place. He found that the stone which covered it was just too heavy for a man to move unaided. What would he do next? He could not get help from outside, even if he had someone whom he could trust, without the unbarring of doors and considerable risk of detection. It was better, if he could, to have his helpmate inside the house. But whom could he ask? This girl had been devoted to him. A man always finds it hard to realize that he may have finally lost a woman's love, however badly he may have treated her. He would try by a few attentions to make his peace with the girl Howells, and then would engage her as his accomplice. Together they would come at night to the cellar, and their united force would suffice to raise the stone. So far I could follow their actions as if I had actually seen them.

"But for two of them, and one a woman, it must have been heavy work, the raising of that stone. A burly Sussex policeman and I had found it no light job. What would they do to assist them? Probably what I should have done myself. I rose and examined carefully the different billets of wood which were scattered round the floor. Almost at once I came upon

28. **allowance . . . personal equation:** taking into account variations in an individual's observation, judgment, and reasoning.



72 what I expected. One piece, about three feet in length, had a very marked indentation at one end, while several were flattened at the sides as if they had been compressed by some considerable weight. Evidently, as they had dragged the stone up, they had thrust the chunks of wood into the chink until at last when the opening was large enough to crawl through, they would hold it open by a billet placed lengthwise, which might very well become indented at the lower end, since the whole weight of the stone would press it down on to the edge of this 73 other slab. So far I was still on safe ground.

"And now how was I to proceed to reconstruct this midnight drama? Clearly, only one could fit into the hole, and that one was Brunton. The girl must have waited above. Brunton then unlocked the box, handed up the contents presumably—since they were not to be found—and then—and then what happened?

"What smoldering fire of vengeance had suddenly sprung into flame in this passionate Celtic woman's soul when she saw the man who had wronged her—wronged her, perhaps, far 74 more than we suspected—in her power? Was it a chance that the wood had slipped and that the stone had shut Brunton into what had become his sepulcher? Had she only been guilty of silence as to his fate? Or had some sudden blow from her hand dashed the support away and sent the slab crashing down into its place? Be that as it might, I seemed to see that woman's figure still clutching at her treasure trove and flying wildly up the winding stair, with her ears ringing perhaps with the muffled screams from behind her and with the drumming of frenzied hands against the slab of stone which was choking her faithless lover's life out.

"Here was the secret of her blanched face, her shaken nerves, her peals of hysterical laughter on the next morning. But what had

been in the box? What had she done with that? Of course, it must have been the old metal and pebbles which my client had dragged from the mere. She had thrown them in there at the first opportunity to remove the last trace of her crime.

"For twenty minutes I had sat motionless, thinking the matter out. Musgrave still stood with a very pale face, swinging his lantern and peering down into the hole.

"These are coins of Charles the First,"<sup>29</sup> said he, holding out the few which had been in the box; 'you see we were right in fixing our date for the Ritual.'

75 "We may find something else of Charles the First,' I cried, as the probable meaning of the first two questions of the Ritual broke suddenly 76 upon me. 'Let me see the contents of the bag which you fished from the mere.'

"We ascended to his study, and he laid the debris before me. I could understand his regarding it as of small importance when I looked at it, for the metal was almost black and the stones lusterless and dull. I rubbed one of them on my sleeve, however, and it glowed afterwards like a spark in the dark hollow of my hand. The metal work was in the form of a double ring, but it had been bent and twisted out of its original shape.

"You must bear in mind,' said I, 'that the royal party made head'<sup>30</sup> in England even after the death of the king, and that when they at last fled they probably left many of their most precious possessions buried behind them, with the intention of returning for them in more peaceful times.'

"My ancestor, Sir Ralph Musgrave, was a prominent Cavalier'<sup>31</sup> and the right-hand man

29. **Charles the First:** Charles Stuart, king of England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1625 to 1649. He was beheaded after the English Civil War, in which the Parliamentary forces defeated the Royalists.

30. **made head:** advanced.

31. **Cavalier** (kāv'ə-līr'): a supporter of Charles Stuart.

72

Holmes methodically confirms his guesses by finding evidence to support ideas about Brunton's progress.

73

*What does Holmes use the metaphor "on safe ground" to represent? Correct assumptions about actions taken by Brunton and accomplice.*

74

At this point, reader must draw own conclusions about how Brunton met his fate.

75

**Characterization.** Holmes's immediate association of Charles the First with riddle is further evidence of his genius. Having made association, he will solve mystery.

76

Contents of bag, reported earlier to be only rusted metal and pebbles or glass, suddenly become important.

77

Here, it becomes clear that bag the maid tossed in lake contained valuable treasure, disguised by tarnish.

78

Musgrave's failure to identify object is consistent with his failure to solve riddle.

79

**Resolution.** Mystery resolved, Holmes explains to Musgrave what readers may have already guessed.

80

Musgrave family retained crown at considerable "bother" and expense because archaeological finds in England belong to state by law.

81

Story ends on note of mystery.

### READING CHECK

1. Piling up papers (p. 46).
2. Crumpled paper, brass key, peg of wood with string, three rusty metal discs (p. 47).
3. They were at college together (p. 49).
4. He was found looking at family documents (p. 51).
5. Rachel Howells (p. 52).
6. Bag with old metal and pebbles or glass (p. 53).
7. From trigonometry lessons (p. 56).
8. Fishing rod, peg, string (p. 56).
9. Thinks "and under" means to dig (p. 57).
10. Ancient crown (p. 60).

of Charles the Second<sup>32</sup> in his wanderings,' said my friend.

"'Ah, indeed!' I answered. 'Well now, I think that really should give us the last link that we wanted. I must congratulate you on coming into the possession, though in rather a tragic manner, of a relic which is of great intrinsic value, but of even greater importance as a his-  
80 torical curiosity.'

78 "'What is it, then?' he gasped in astonishment.

"'It is nothing less than the ancient crown of 81 the kings of England.'

"'The crown!'

"'Precisely. Consider what the Ritual says. How does it run? 'Whose was it?' 'His who is gone.' That was after the execution of Charles. Then, 'Who shall have it?' 'He who will come.' That was Charles the Second, whose advent was already foreseen. There can, I think, be no doubt that this battered and shapeless diadem once encircled the brows of the royal Stuarts.'

"'And how came it in the pond?'

79 "'Ah, that is a question that will take some time to answer.' And with that I sketched out to him the whole long chain of surmise and 'of proof which I had constructed. The twilight had closed in and the moon was shining brightly in the sky before my narrative was finished.

"'And how was it then that Charles did not get his crown when he returned?' asked Musgrave, pushing back the relic into its linen bag.

"'Ah, there you lay your finger upon the one point which we shall probably never be able to clear up. It is likely that the Musgrave who held the secret died in the interval, and by some oversight left this guide to his descen-

dant without explaining the meaning of it. From that day to this it has been handed down from father to son, until at last it came within reach of a man who tore its secret out of it and lost his life in the venture.'

"And that's the story of the Musgrave Ritual, Watson. They have the crown down at Hurlstone—though they had some legal bother and a considerable sum to pay before they were allowed to retain it. I am sure that if you mentioned my name they would be happy to show it to you. Of the woman nothing was ever heard, and the probability is that she got away out of England and carried herself and the memory of her crime to some land beyond the seas."

### Reading Check

1. What does Dr. Watson consider Holmes's most annoying habit?
2. What is contained in the wooden box Holmes shows Watson?
3. How does Holmes know Reginald Musgrave?
4. Why was Brunton dismissed?
5. Who tells Musgrave that Brunton is gone?
6. What do the servants find when they drag the lake?
7. How does Musgrave happen to know the height of the old tree that once stood on the lawn?
8. What does Holmes use in order to calculate the length of the shadow thrown by the elm?
9. What clue in the Musgrave Ritual does Holmes misread?
10. What is the treasure Brunton was after?

32. **Charles the Second:** the son of Charles the First. He lived in exile until he was called back to England and the monarchy was restored in 1660.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify elements of plot in "The Musgrave Ritual," including **exposition**, **complications**, **climax**, and **resolution**.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Sherlock Holmes is such a believable character and his name is so well known that many people do not realize that he is a work of fiction. It would be interesting to have a group of students conduct a survey of people in their community to

get an idea how widespread this misconception is. Have students ask their interview subjects if they know who Sherlock Holmes is, and if they do, what they can tell about him. The group can make an oral presentation of their findings to the class.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. At the opening of the story, Watson speaks about an *anomaly* in Holmes's character.  
**a.** What aspects of Holmes's character does he find it difficult to reconcile? **b.** Do you think these contrasting qualities make Holmes a more believable or less believable figure?

2. Holmes arrives at his conclusions by the process of deductive reasoning. He first gathers his evidence and then draws inferences logically from this evidence. Trace the steps by which he arrives at the precise location indicated in the Ritual.

**3a.** According to Holmes, what are his methods in solving problems? **b.** How does he reconstruct the drama that must have taken place in the cellar?

4. After Holmes solves the case of the Musgrave Ritual, what questions still remain unanswered?

5. "The Musgrave Ritual," like the other adventures of Sherlock Holmes, is a special kind of story—the **detective story**, in which the main action consists of solving some mystery. Since the detective story challenges us to match our wits against those of the sleuth, evidence is not withheld. We are in possession of all the facts, but we do not possess Holmes's brilliant powers of deductive reasoning that enable him to draw the right conclusions from these facts.  
**a.** What do you consider the most impressive example of Holmes's reasoning in this story?  
**b.** What is the climax of the story?

6. Sherlock Holmes is one of the most famous characters in all of literature. He appears regularly on stage, on screen, and on television in various adaptations of Arthur Conan Doyle's stories. What do you think is the reason for his immense popularity?

## Literary Elements

### The Story Within a Story

Sometimes an author chooses to tell a story within the **framework** of another story. In its simplest form, the framework can introduce a group of people discussing a particular topic. One of the group will then say, "Oh, yes. That reminds me of something that happened several years ago." And so, the inner story begins. In such a story, the inner story is usually much more important than the framework.

In other stories the framework plays a much more important role. "The Musgrave Ritual," for example, tells two stories that are important. In the framework story, Watson introduces us to Sherlock Holmes, and we listen in on their conversation about Holmes's career. The inner story, about the facts in the case of the Musgrave Ritual, is related by Holmes. The framework story and the story within a story reinforce one another, and each story adds meaning to the other.

1. In what way are the framework story and the inner story related? How do both cast light on the character and achievements of Sherlock Holmes?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Finding Appropriate Meanings

Many words in our language have several different meanings. If you consult a college dictionary, you will find more than one entry for the word *affect*. As a verb, *affect* can have the meaning "to influence," as in this sentence: "Prolonged stress *affects* one's health." The verb *affect* can have the meaning "to move the emotions," as in this sentence: "Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg *affected* his audience profoundly." Still another meaning of *affect* is "to pretend or feign," as in this sentence: "She *af-*

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Neat methods of thought and dress with his untidy personal habits. 1b. Responses will vary; most will agree that they do.

2. Identifies oak, locates elm stump, determines height of elm, calculates when sun would be over oak and length of elm's shadow, steps off distance, finds cellar.

3a. To put himself in a person's place, gauge person's intelligence, then try to imagine how person would have proceeded. 3b. By putting himself in Brunton's place.

4. How Brunton met his fate and what part was played by Rachel Howells.

5a. Responses will vary. Examples include his understanding of riddle and calculations needed to solve it and his reconstruction of drama in cellar. 5b. Discovery of Brunton's body and Holmes's reconstruction of drama in cellar.

6. Responses will vary. Perhaps his intriguing personality and remarkable ability to solve mysteries.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. In framework story, reader learns certain facts about Holmes's personality and fame. Inner story details present clear view of neat and methodical thought processes ascribed to Holmes by Watson in framework story.



The life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is almost as interesting as that of his most famous character, Sherlock Holmes. Some students might want to write a biographical essay about this author based on their research of encyclopedia articles, biographies, and books on Sherlock Holmes.

In "The Musgrave Ritual," Holmes mentions the affair of the *Gloria Scott* and "A Study in Scarlet." Some students might want to read these stories or other Holmes stories contained in collections such as *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*.

Students who enjoy the detective genre as represented by the Sherlock Holmes stories may also enjoy some of the stories by English mystery writers Agatha Christie or P. D. James.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. Watson means that Holmes dressed in a manner that projected an image of quiet primness.
2. In this sentence, *singular* means unique, peculiar, or exceptional.
3. *Distraction* means (a) the act of diverting attention, (b) something that diverts, especially an amusement, or (c) extreme mental or emotional disturbance.
4. In his complaint, Watson uses last meaning.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Opinions may differ on whether a particular story should be categorized as *escape* or *interpretive literature*. Several stories might be considered both.

## EXTENDING YOUR STUDY

1. 221B Baker Street is the address of Holmes's lodgings in London.
2. Professor Moriarty is the evil and shrewd enemy of Sherlock Holmes.
3. Mrs. Hudson is the landlady at 221B Baker Street.
4. Inspector Lestrade is a Scotland Yard official who often takes credit for cases solved by Holmes.
5. Irene Adler is a beautiful actress who outwits Holmes in "A Scandal in Bohemia"; although Holmes is not a romantic man, he keeps her photograph and refers to her as "the woman."

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Although Doyle is best known for his Sherlock Holmes stories, he also wrote historical romances. Two of the most popular are *Micah Clarke* and *The White Company*. He also published *Waterloo*, a one-act play.

*affected* an aloof manner in order to hide her shyness." *Affect* can also have the meaning "to have a preference for," as in this sentence: "He *affects* English tweeds." What meaning does Watson have in mind when he says that Holmes "*affected* a certain quiet primness of dress"?

1. Check the different meanings of the word *singular* in a dictionary. What specific meaning does it have in this sentence: "A collection of my trifling achievements would certainly be incomplete which contained no account of this very *singular* business"?
2. What are the various meanings of *distraction*?
3. What meaning does it have in Watson's complaint that Holmes was "one of the most untidy men that ever drove a fellow lodger to *distraction*"?

## Writing About Literature

### ► Classifying Stories

Laurence Perrine, a noted critic, has identified two broad categories of literature that he calls literature of escape and literature of interpretation. *Escape literature* exists primarily for our pleasure, to entertain us by taking us away from everyday reality. By contrast, *interpretive literature* exists to expand our awareness and understanding of life, to give us insight into our own behavior and the behavior of others.

Consider the stories you have read thus far in this unit. Into which category would you place each one? Do any of the stories fit both categories? In a paragraph give reasons for your answers.

## Extending Your Study

### Investigating a Topic

Sherlock Holmes is so popular a character that readers have formed groups that meet to share their encyclopedic knowledge of the adventures of Holmes and Dr. Watson. Locate an article or a book on Sherlock Holmes and report briefly on the significance of each of the following in Holmes's career:

1. 221B Baker Street
2. Professor Moriarty
3. Mrs. Hudson
4. Inspector Lestrade
5. Irene Adler

## About the Author

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)



Arthur Conan Doyle once said that the character of Sherlock Holmes was suggested by his memories of an actual doctor at the Edinburgh Infirmary, where Conan Doyle studied medicine. In

all, Conan Doyle produced four full-length novels and fifty-six stories about Sherlock Holmes. Holmes first appeared in print in *A Study in Scarlet*, in 1887. At one point, Conan Doyle became tired of his creation and tried to kill him off in "The Final Problem." Readers, however, would not allow Holmes to die and Conan Doyle had to bring him back in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the character of Walter Mitty, contrasting his real life with his secret life. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 68 will give students practice in recognizing the jargon of several groups mentioned in the story.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Walter Mitty is a famous character in modern fiction, and the story that introduces him is considered a classic. While Mitty verges on caricature, he is memorable, perhaps because he speaks to the dreamer in all of us.

# CHARACTER

# The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

**JAMES THURBER**

*This is one of the most popular short stories ever written. During World War II American fliers formed "Walter Mitty" clubs, and the phrase "pocketa-pocketa" became familiar on many airfields. As you read, ask yourself what is the reason for the title character's wide appeal.*

1 "We're going through!" The Commander's voice was like thin ice breaking. He wore his full-dress uniform, with the heavily braided white cap pulled down rakishly over one cold gray eye. "We can't make it, sir. It's spoiling for  
2 a hurricane, if you ask me." "I'm not asking you, Lieutenant Berg," said the Commander. "Throw on the power lights! Rev her up to 8,500! We're going through!" The pounding of the cylinders increased: ta-pocketa-pocketa-pocketa-pocketa. The Commander stared at the ice forming on the pilot window. He walked over and twisted a row of complicated dials. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" he shouted. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" repeated Lieutenant Berg. "Full strength in No. 3 turret!" shouted the Commander. "Full strength in No. 3 turret!" The crew, bending to their

various tasks in the huge, hurtling eight-engined Navy hydroplane, looked at each other and grinned. "The Old Man'll get us through," they said to one another. "The Old Man ain't afraid of Hell!" . . .

3 "Not so fast! You're driving too fast!" said Mrs. Mitty. "What are you driving so fast for?" "Hmm?" said Walter Mitty. He looked at his wife, in the seat beside him, with shocked astonishment. She seemed grossly unfamiliar, like a strange woman who had yelled at him in  
4 a crowd. "You were up to fifty-five," she said. "You know I don't like to go more than forty. You were up to fifty-five." Walter Mitty drove on toward Waterbury in silence, the roaring of the SN202 through the worst storm in twenty  
5 years of Navy flying fading in the remote, intimate airways of his mind. "You're tensed up

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote focuses on the enormous popularity the title character has held with readers. What does "secret life" imply? What does the reference to World War II American fliers suggest about Walter Mitty's "secret life"?

## The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion of the characterization of Walter Mitty.

1

Story begins without any hint that what is happening is actually taking place in someone's imagination.

2

**Characterization.** Commander is fearless and will tolerate no weakness on part of his inferiors.

3

Sudden shift to Mrs. Mitty might seem confusing at first, but it soon becomes apparent that Mrs. Mitty has been daydreaming.

4

Allowing daydream to influence his driving, Mitty has pressed down ("full strength") on accelerator of automobile.

5

**What is suggested by "remote, intimate airways of his mind"?** Answers will vary. His mind is far away from "real" world; he is most familiar with life in his mind.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

A meek, forgetful, and ineffectual man named Walter Mitty escapes the world and his bossy wife by daydreaming. During a routine shopping trip to town with his wife, details of daily life are departure points for Mitty's daydreams. While

driving the car, he imagines he is the commander of a navy hydroplane. What do you suppose he "becomes" when he drives past a hospital? When he hears a newsboy's shouts about a trial?

## PRESENTATION

Whether our fantasies are attainable ambitions or magnificent visions of the impossible, they have the power to hold us spellbound. As students read the story and become acquainted with this famous character, they should note

**6** *What does Mrs. Mitty's comment tell us about Mr. Mitty?* This is not first episode of his bizarre conduct; she has been nagging him to see doctor.

**7** **Conflict.** Mrs. Mitty is nagging wife. Walter's retreat into daydreams is an attempt, in part, to escape domestic battles.

**8** **Tone.** Use of inaccurate medical jargon and high-sounding character names creates humorous tone.

**9** Two renowned doctors have come to assist in operation, only to find world's expert has situation under control.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

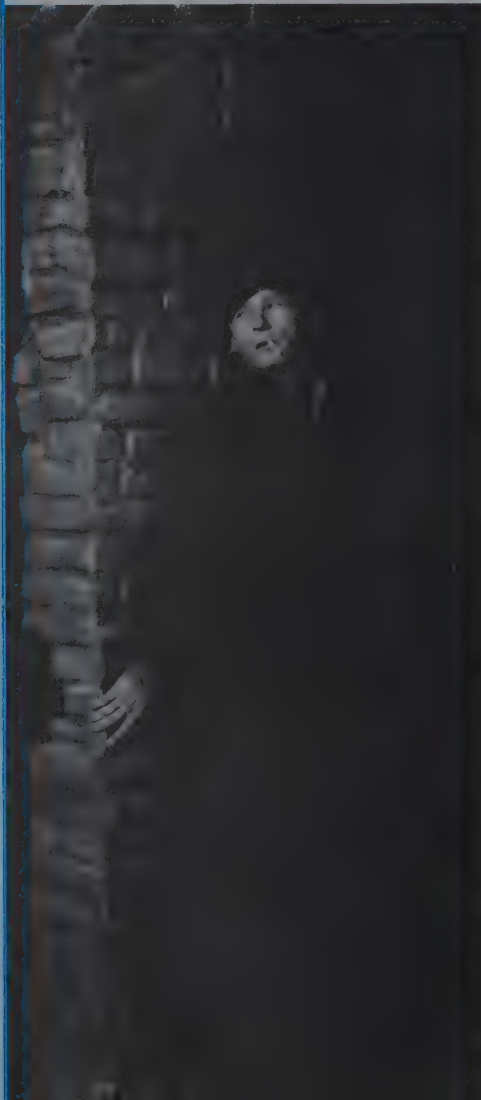
### Exploring the Subject

Everyone tends to daydream or to have fantasies. But Walter Mitty is a special case because he is so meek and because he depends so completely on his imaginary roles as a means of coping with a boring life. It is the tremendous disparity between his actual abilities and his imagined triumphs that makes him at once pathetic and comic.

**6** again," said Mrs. Mitty. "It's one of your days. I wish you'd let Dr. Renshaw look you over."

Walter Mitty stopped the car in front of the building where his wife went to have her hair

A scene from a film version of "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty."



**7** done. "Remember to get those overshoes while I'm having my hair done," she said. "I don't need overshoes," said Mitty. She put her mirror back into her bag. "We've been all through that," she said, getting out of the car. "You're not a young man any longer." He raced the engine a little. "Why don't you wear your gloves? Have you lost your gloves?" Walter Mitty reached in a pocket and brought out the gloves. He put them on, but after she had turned and gone into the building and he had driven on to a red light, he took them off again. "Pick it up, brother!" snapped a cop as the light changed, and Mitty hastily pulled on his gloves and lurched ahead. He drove around the streets aimlessly for a time, and then he drove past the hospital on his way to the parking lot.

**8** ... "It's the millionaire banker, Wellington McMillan," said the pretty nurse. "Yes?" said Walter Mitty, removing his gloves slowly. "Who has the case?" "Dr. Renshaw and Dr. Benbow, but there are two specialists here, Dr. Remington from New York and Dr. Pritchard-Mitford from London. He flew over!" A door opened down a long cool corridor and Dr. Renshaw came out. He looked distraught and haggard. "Hello, Mitty," he said. "We're having the devil's own time with McMillan, the millionaire banker and close personal friend of Roosevelt. Osteoarthritis of the ductal tract. Tertiary. Wish you'd take a look at him." "Glad to," said Mitty.

In the operating room there were whispered introductions: "Dr. Remington, Dr. Mitty. Dr. Pritchard-Mitford, Dr. Mitty." "I've read your book on streptothricosis," said Pritchard-Mitford, shaking hands. "A brilliant performance, sir." "Thank you," said Walter Mitty. "Didn't know you were in the States, Mitty," grumbled Remington. "Coals to Newcastle,"<sup>1</sup>

1. **Coals to Newcastle:** a saying used to indicate unnecessary labor. Newcastle, a city in England, is famous for its production of coal.



that Mitty is developed through a series of contrasting scenes—his masterful daydreams juxtaposed with his inept dealings with the real world.

You may want to arrange the class in a circle and have students take turns reading the story

aloud. Because everyone will have something to say about Walter Mitty, consider arranging small discussion groups to give each student an opportunity to express an opinion. After students have fully considered the study questions, methods of **characterization**, examples of **dramatic irony**,

and examples of mock-jargon, they may be interested in some speculative questions. Should we blame other people for our personal deficiencies? How can daydreams help us? How can they be dangerous?

bringing Mitford and me up here for a tertiary.” “You are very kind,” said Mitty. A huge, complicated machine, connected to the operating table, with many tubes and wires, began at this moment to go pocketa-pocketa-pocketa. “The new anesthetizer is giving way!” shouted 14 an intern. “There is no one in the East who knows how to fix it!” “Quiet, man!” said Mitty, in a low, cool voice. He sprang to the machine, which was now going pocketa-pocketa-queep-pocketa-queep. He began fingering delicately a row of glistening dials. “Give me a fountain pen!” he snapped. Someone handed him a fountain pen. He pulled a faulty piston out of the machine and inserted the pen in its place. “That will hold for ten minutes,” he said. “Get on with the operation.” A nurse hurried over and whispered to Renshaw, and Mitty saw the man turn pale. “Coreopsis has set in,” said 11 Renshaw nervously. “If you would take over, Mitty?” Mitty looked at him and at the craven figure of Benbow, who drank, and at the grave, uncertain faces of the two great specialists. “If you wish,” he said. They slipped a white gown on him; he adjusted a mask and drew on thin gloves; nurses handed him shining . . .

12 “Back it up, Mac! Look out for that Buick!” 16 Walter Mitty jammed on the brakes. “Wrong lane, Mac,” said the parking-lot attendant, looking at Mitty closely. “Gee. Yeh,” muttered Mitty. He began cautiously to back out of the lane marked “Exit Only.” “Leave her sit there,” said the attendant. “I’ll put her away.” Mitty got out of the car. “Hey, better leave the key.” “Oh,” said Mitty, handing the man the ignition key. The attendant vaulted into the car, backed it up with insolent skill, and put it where it belonged.

They’re so cocky, thought Walter Mitty, walking along Main Street; they think they 13 know everything. Once he had tried to take his chains off, outside New Milford, and he had

got them wound around the axles. A man had had to come out in a wrecking car and unwind them, a young, grinning garageman. Since then Mrs. Mitty always made him drive to a garage to have the chains taken off. The next time, he thought, I’ll wear my right arm in a sling; they won’t grin at me then. I’ll have my right arm in a sling and they’ll see I couldn’t possibly take the chains off myself. He kicked at the slush on the sidewalk. “Overshoes,” he said to himself, and he began looking for a shoe store.

When he came out into the street again, with 15 the overshoes in a box under his arm, Walter Mitty began to wonder what the other thing was his wife had told him to get. She had told him twice before they set out from their house for Waterbury. In a way he hated these weekly trips to town—he was always getting something wrong. Kleenex, he thought, Squibb’s, razor blades? No. Toothpaste, toothbrush, bicarbonate, carborundum, initiative and referendum?<sup>2</sup> He gave it up. But she would remember it. “Where’s the what’s-its-name?” she would ask. “Don’t tell me you forgot the what’s-its-name.” A newsboy went by shouting something about the Waterbury trial.

. . . “Perhaps this will refresh your memory.” The District Attorney suddenly thrust a heavy automatic at the quiet figure on the witness stand. “Have you ever seen this before?” Walter Mitty took the gun and examined it expertly. “This is my Webley-Vickers 50.80,” he said calmly. An excited buzz ran around the courtroom. The Judge rapped for order. “You are a crack shot with any sort of firearms, I believe?” said the District Attorney, insinuatingly. “Objection!” shouted Mitty’s attorney. “We

2. **carborundum, initiative and referendum:** Carborundum is a hard, abrasive material. Initiative refers to the right of citizens to introduce new legislation. Referendum refers to the right of citizens to vote directly on laws. The association in Mitty’s mind is one of sound, not of sense.

10

**Characterization.** Mitty—a man who cannot properly park car, get through revolving door, or take off tire chains—imagines himself master of men and complicated machinery.

11

Mitty’s dreams provide imagined difficulties that he easily overcomes.

12

Mitty is startled out of daydream that has led him to enter a parking lot past an “Exit Only” sign.

13

**What is ironic about Mitty’s being incapable of taking snow chains off his tires without winding them around the axles?** Moments before he imagined himself to be a mechanical genius.

14

**Why does Mitty decide to wear a sling on his arm when he brings in his car next time?** As an excuse for his inability to remove chains.

15

**Conflict.** Mitty’s fear that his wife will scold him underscores nature of conflict between them; he cannot or will not live up to her expectations.

16

Mitty enters new dream, as defendant at murder trial.

17

**Irony.** In daydream Mitty recklessly weakens his own defense by professing himself to be expert shot with either hand. In real life, incompetent with both hands.

18

**Irony.** Mitty's dreams allow him to escape his nagging wife, but they do not conceal inept aspects of his true nature: he is ordinary man who, intimidated by size of supermarket, will only dream of, never attain, heroic status.

19

Pictures of bombing planes prompt another daydream, with Mitty again as a hero.

20

**What words in this paragraph serve to lighten the tone?** Answers will vary. May include "tousled," "spot of brandy," "whined," "carelessly," "tossed it off," "humming," "cheerio."

21

"Something struck his shoulder" unites imaginary events with awful reality of his nagging wife.

have shown that the defendant could not have fired the shot. We have shown that he wore his right arm in a sling on the night of the fourteenth of July," Walter Mitty raised his hand briefly and the bickering attorneys were stilled.

17 "With any known make of gun," he said evenly, "I could have killed Gregory Fitzhurs at three hundred feet *with my left hand*." Pandemonium broke loose in the courtroom. A woman's scream rose above the bedlam and suddenly a lovely, dark-haired girl was in Walter Mitty's arms. The District Attorney struck at her savagely. Without rising from his chair, Mitty let the man have it on the point of the chin. "You miserable cur!" . . .

"Puppy biscuit," said Walter Mitty. He stopped walking and the buildings of Waterbury rose up out of the misty courtroom and surrounded him again. A woman who was passing laughed. "He said 'Puppy biscuit,'" she said to her companion. "That man said 'Puppy biscuit' to himself." Walter Mitty hurried on.

18 He went into an A & P, not the first one he came to but a smaller one farther up the street. "I want some biscuit for small, young dogs," he said to the clerk. "Any special brand, sir?" The greatest pistol shot in the world thought a moment. "It says 'Puppies Bark for It' on the box," said Walter Mitty.

His wife would be through at the hairdresser's in fifteen minutes, Mitty saw in looking at his watch, unless they had trouble drying it; sometimes they had trouble drying it. She didn't like to get to the hotel first; she would want him to be there waiting for her as usual. He found a big leather chair in the lobby, facing a window, and he put the overshoes and the puppy biscuit on the floor beside it. He picked up an old copy of *Liberty* and sank down into the chair. "Can Germany Conquer the World Through the Air?" Walter Mitty looked at the pictures of bombing planes and of ruined streets.

20 . . . "The cannonading has got the wind up in young Raleigh, sir," said the sergeant. Captain Mitty looked up at him through tousled hair. "Get him to bed," he said wearily, "with the others. I'll fly alone." "But you can't, sir," said the sergeant anxiously. "It takes two men to handle that bomber and the Archies<sup>3</sup> are pounding hell out of the air. Von Richtman's circus<sup>4</sup> is between here and Saulier." "Somebody's got to get that ammunition dump," said Mitty. "I'm going over. Spot of brandy?" He poured a drink for the sergeant and one for himself. War thundered and whined around the dugout and battered at the door. There was a rending of wood and splinters flew through the room. "A bit of a near thing," said Captain Mitty carelessly. "The box barrage is closing in," said the sergeant. "We only live once, Sergeant," said Mitty, with his faint, fleeting smile. "Or do we?" He poured another brandy and tossed it off. "I never see a man could hold his brandy like you, sir," said the sergeant. "Begging your pardon, sir." Captain Mitty stood up and strapped on his huge Webley-Vickers automatic. "It's forty kilometers through hell, sir," said the sergeant. Mitty finished one last brandy. "After all," he said softly, "what isn't?" The pounding of the cannon increased; there was the rat-tat-tatting of machine guns, and from somewhere came the menacing pocketa-pocketa of the new flame-throwers. Walter Mitty walked to the door of the dugout humming "Auprès de Ma Blonde."<sup>5</sup> He turned and waved to the sergeant. "Cheerio!" he said. . . .

21 Something struck his shoulder. "I've been looking all over this hotel for you," said Mrs. Mitty. "Why do you have to hide in this old chair? How did you expect me to find you?"

3. **Archies:** allied troops' name for the antiaircraft guns in World War I.

4. **circus:** here, a squadron of planes flying in close formation.

5. "**Auprès de Ma Blonde**": popular French song.

"Things close in," said Walter Mitty vaguely. "What?" Mrs. Mitty said. "Did you get the what's-its-name? The puppy biscuit? What's in that box?" "Overshoes," said Mitty. "Couldn't you have put them on in the store?" "I was thinking," said Walter Mitty. "Does it ever occur to you that I am sometimes thinking?" She looked at him. "I'm going to take your temperature when I get you home," she said.

They went out through the revolving doors that made a faintly derisive whistling sound when you pushed them. It was two blocks to the parking lot. At the drugstore on the corner she said, "Wait here for me. I forgot something. I won't be a minute." She was more than a minute. Walter Mitty lighted a cigarette. It began to rain, rain with sleet in it. He stood up against the wall of the drugstore, smoking. . . . He put his shoulders back and his heels together. "To hell with the handkerchief," said Walter Mitty scornfully. He took one last drag on his cigarette and snapped it away. Then, with that faint, fleeting smile playing about his

22 lips, he faced the firing squad; erect and motionless, proud and disdainful, Walter Mitty the Undefeated, inscrutable<sup>6</sup> to the last.

6. **inscrutable**: unknowable, mysterious.

### Reading Check

1. Who is the "Old Man" in Mitty's first fantasy?
2. Where does Mitty drop off his wife?
3. In the hospital fantasy, how does Dr. Mitty repair the broken machine?
4. What causes the woman who passes Mitty in the street to begin laughing?
5. Why does Mitty's wife decide that she must take his temperature when they get home?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. Contrast Walter Mitty's real life with his secret life. Why does he feel the need to escape from real life?
2. Each of Mitty's daydreams is sparked by some detail of everyday life. For example, Mitty drives past a hospital and imagines himself a famous doctor. Explain how his other daydreams grow out of actual events.
3. What kind of person is Mrs. Mitty?
4. The final incident of the story shows Walter Mitty dreaming of himself before a firing squad. **a.** How is this incident symbolic of his view of himself? **b.** Is this final daydream of Walter Mitty's an adequate summing-up of the total effect of the story? Why or why not?
5. Readers have found "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" both funny and sad. How is it funny and how is it sad?

## Literary Elements

### Direct and Indirect Characterization

A writer can develop and reveal character in a number of ways: (1) through a physical description of the character; (2) through the character's actions; (3) through the character's thoughts, feelings, and speeches; (4) through the comments and reactions of other characters; (5) through direct statements giving the writer's opinion of the character. The first four methods are **indirect** methods of characterization; they *show* or *dramatize* character. The last method is **direct** characterization; it *tells* rather than dramatizes. Within a single passage, an author may use both direct and indirect methods of characterization.

James Thurber uses three of these methods of characterization to develop Walter Mitty.

22

**Static character.** Just as he was when story opens, Mitty is lost in fantasy. He has not changed.

### READING CHECK

1. Mitty as commander of navy hydroplane (p. 63).
2. At beauty parlor (p. 64).
3. Uses pen to replace piston (p. 65).
4. He says "Puppy biscuit" (p. 66).
5. His behavior is peculiar (p. 67).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. In real life he is bullied, forgetful, ineffectual; in secret life he is heroic. Feels need to escape real-life situations of being laughed at and regarded as incompetent.
2. Driving car causes Mitty to imagine that he is commander of navy hydroplane; when newsboy mentions trial, he imagines himself as heroic defendant; pictures of bombers spark dream of being flying ace; waiting against wall prompts dream of being before firing squad.
3. Bossy, impatient, and sharp-tongued.
- 4a. In dreams he is epitome of romantic hero. **4b.** Responses will vary. Meek man waiting in cold for wife contrasts with bold hero confronting firing squad.
5. Responses will vary. Funny in incongruity of real-life Mitty and dream hero; in use of clichés from fiction and films; in use of mock-jargon and stereotyped heroism in dreams; in absurdity of some of Mitty's predicaments in real life. Sadness is in way others treat him and in his inability to cope with everyday world.



## LITERARY ELEMENTS

### Direct and Indirect Characterization

1. *Through actions:* "Walter Mitty reached in a pocket and brought out the gloves. He put them on, but after she had turned and gone into the building and he had driven on to a red light, he took them off again."

*Through thoughts, feelings, and speeches:* "The next time, he thought, I'll wear my right arm in a sling; they won't grin at me then."

*Through comments and reactions of other characters:* "A woman who was passing laughed. 'He said 'Puppy biscuit,'" she said to her companion."

### Dramatic Irony

1. When courtroom hero calls evil District Attorney a "miserable cur," he remembers Mrs. Mitty has told him to buy puppy biscuits. When flying-ace Mitty says "Cheerio!" to his sergeant, Mrs. Mitty strikes his shoulder. Facing a firing squad, Mitty waits in cold for wife. We can see that Mitty's secret life is his most important life.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. "Obstreosis of the ductal tract" sounds like medical terminology, but it is nonsense. *Tertiary*, though a real word, becomes nonsense in medical context in story.

2. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" and "Full strength in No. 3 turret" are mock-jargon for Mitty's hydroplane; "Webley-Vickers 50.80" refers to gun as evidence in trial scene.

- 1 Tell which methods he uses and give examples of their use.

### Dramatic Irony

Irony contrasts what is real with what only seems to be real. A writer may say one thing and mean quite another. This kind of irony, which was discussed on page 37, is called **verbal irony**. Another kind of irony is **dramatic irony**. In dramatic irony, the contrast depends upon the difference between what a character believes and what readers know is true. For example, Mitty has a fantasy about being a flying ace, but the reader knows from Mitty's inept behavior in the parking lot that he has trouble just parking his car.

- 1 Find other examples of dramatic irony in "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." How do the ironic contrasts in this story deepen your understanding of Mitty as a character?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Jargon

**Jargon** usually refers to the special language of a group of people, especially people in the same job. Engineers have their jargon, as do doctors, lawyers, and carpenters. Often, such language is necessary to communicate complex or technical ideas. But sometimes, special language is used simply to impress outsiders, to show that writers or speakers know more than their readers or listeners. Language used for this purpose fits another definition of jargon—"incomprehensible speech."

"The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" pokes fun

- 1 at the jargon of several groups. Find examples
- 2 of the jargon of doctors. Can you find other examples of jargon? What are they?

## Writing About Literature

### Analyzing the Use of Dramatic Irony

Write a paper analyzing the use of dramatic irony in "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." If you wish, you may follow this plan.

1. Make two lists, one for the way Mitty views himself in his fantasies, and one for the way he really is. Here is an example:

<i>In fantasy</i>	<i>In reality</i>
Page 63	
Mitty daydreams about flying fearlessly through a storm.	He always drives at moderate speed, below 55.

Add at least one example for each fantasy.

2. Compose a topic sentence that draws together the evidence.
3. Develop the topic sentence. One way to develop it is to divide the evidence you have gathered. In one paragraph, focus on the character of the daydreamer. In another paragraph, focus on the character in real life. Fill in supporting evidence for each subordinate idea.
4. Write a concluding sentence that summarizes the effect of the irony.

This is what your outline for the essay might look like:

In "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," James Thurber uses dramatic irony to contrast the bold hero Mitty dreams of being with the meek person he is in real life.

In his daydreams, Mitty is a brave, unconquerable figure who is equal to any challenge and who wins everyone's admiration.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to contrast Walter Mitty's secret life and his real life, describing Mitty's character traits in both his dream life and his real life.

In actuality, Mitty is a timid man who is unable to cope with the everyday world and who is treated with contempt by others.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The irony in the story deepens the reader's understanding of Mitty as both a humorous and a serious character.

## Creative Writing

### ► Writing a Sequel to the Story

Write a sequel to "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." Let Mitty have one more daydream of glory. Show how a detail of everyday life sparks his daydream. At the end of your story, show how his daydream is rudely interrupted.

Or, if you like, write a short, short story about another character who lives a double life—an everyday life and a secret life. Show why your character needs a secret life. Keep in mind that *showing* is a more effective way of developing a character than telling is.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Students may want to read other Thurber stories in such collections as *My World—and Welcome to It*, *The Middle-Aged Man on the Flying Trapeze*, and *The Beast in Me and Other Animals*.

The 1947 film *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* is

available on cassette. Students might enjoy seeing the film and comparing it with the story.

Some students may enjoy exploring the topic of daydreams and writing short essays examining what importance, if any, psychologists and specialists attach to them.

## About the Author

James Thurber (1894–1961)



James Thurber, one of America's most highly regarded humorists, achieved success as both a writer and a cartoonist. Part of his success lies in his gift for being funny and serious at the same

time. His writings and drawings are populated by men and women who attempt to cope with one another and with modern life, and by puzzled, compassionate dogs who quietly observe the human scene.

Thurber grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and attended Ohio State University. Later he wrote about these early years in the wildly funny *My Life and Hard Times*. After working on newspapers in Columbus, Paris, and New York, he joined the staff of *The New Yorker* magazine. He was associated with *The New Yorker* for the rest of his life, first as an editor, then as a writer. He created essays, stories, and cartoons for the magazine and became one of its best-known contributors. Much of his work is collected in books with titles that reveal his ironic attitude toward the world at large: for example, *My World and Welcome to It*, *The Middle-Aged Man on the Flying Trapeze*, and *The Beast in Me and Other Animals*. He also collaborated on a play with Elliot Nugent, an old college friend. *The Male Animal* was a considerable success when first produced and is still occasionally revived. Some of his best satire appears in *Fables for Our Time* and *Further Fables for Our Time*. Thurber also wrote several children's books that are regarded as classics, among them *The White Deer* and *The Thirteen Clocks*.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Students should have little difficulty completing this assignment if they follow directions given in textbook. Encourage advanced students to try alternative organizations or to examine the sad, almost tragic, **tone** of the story, to which dramatic irony contributes.

## CREATIVE WRITING

In writing a sequel to the story, students have the advantage of already knowing **characters**, **setting**, and **plot**. They can still use their imaginations, however, in providing a link between real life and fantasy and in creating mock-jargon and appropriate action.

Writing a story about another character who lives a double life demands even more creativity. Some students might develop a story from an actual experience, such as daydreaming in class. Other students might write a fictional account. Let students brainstorm ideas to help each other, prompting them with questions such as these: What are the daydreams of a young athlete watching the Olympic Games? What are the daydreams of a contestant in a television game show?

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Like several other writers and editors who worked at *The New Yorker*, Thurber has written about his experiences there. The book, *The Years with Ross*, focuses on his relationship with Herbert Ross, editor of the magazine.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on page 209.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the two main **characters** and their actions in "All the Years of Her Life." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 74 will give students practice in recognizing informal language in dialogue.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students if it is possible for people to live in the same house for years without really looking at each other. Ask them to think about and comment on what kinds of experiences cause teenagers to study their parents.

# All the Years of Her Life

## MORLEY CALLAGHAN

*In order for characters in a short story to be credible, they must behave consistently and their actions must be motivated. Note how Callaghan makes each of the three figures in this story a recognizable and believable individual.*

### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the **characterization** of the three people in the story. Remind students that an author may develop a character through **direct characterization** (direct statements by the author) and **indirect characterization** (physical description; character's actions, thoughts, feelings, and speech; comments and reactions of other characters). As students read, ask them to note which methods the author uses to make the three figures in this story believable.

### All the Years of Her Life

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in stimulating discussion of the **characters** and their actions.

1

Though story seems to start slowly, there are hints that something is wrong: Alfred is nervous, his face is white, and his employer is speaking in strange tone of voice.

2

Alfred's question is a standard form of denial.

3

Alfred's reaction betrays his guilt before he empties his pockets.

4

**Exposition.** Paragraph provides important background information, especially that Alfred has been in trouble regularly.

They were closing the drugstore, and Alfred Higgins, who had just taken off his white jacket, was putting on his coat and getting ready to go home. The little gray-haired man, Sam Carr, who owned the drugstore, was bending down behind the cash register, and when Alfred Higgins passed him, he looked up and said softly, "Just a moment, Alfred. One moment before you go."

1 The soft, confident, quiet way in which Sam Carr spoke made Alfred start to button his coat nervously. He felt sure his face was white. Sam Carr usually said, "Good night," brusquely, without looking up. In the six months he had been working in the drugstore Alfred had never heard his employer speak softly like that. His heart began to beat so loud it was hard for him to get his breath. "What is it, Mr. Carr?" he asked.

"Maybe you'd be good enough to take a few things out of your pocket and leave them here before you go," Sam Carr said.

2 "What things? What are you talking about?"

"You've got a compact and a lipstick and at least two tubes of toothpaste in your pocket, Alfred."

"What do you mean? Do you think I'm

3 crazy?" Alfred blustered. His face got red and he knew he looked fierce with indignation. But Sam Carr, standing by the door with his blue eyes shining bright behind his glasses and his lips moving underneath his gray mustache, only nodded his head a few times, and then Alfred grew very frightened and he didn't know what to say. Slowly he raised his hand and dipped it into his pocket, and with his eyes never meeting Sam Carr's eyes, he took out a blue compact and two tubes of toothpaste and a lipstick, and he laid them one by one on the counter.

"Petty thieving, eh, Alfred?" Sam Carr said. "And maybe you'd be good enough to tell me how long this has been going on."

"This is the first time I ever took anything."

"So now you think you'll tell me a lie, eh? What kind of a sap do I look like, huh? I don't know what goes on in my own store, eh? I tell you you've been doing this pretty steady," Sam Carr said as he went over and stood behind the cash register.

4 Ever since Alfred had left school he had been getting in trouble wherever he worked. He lived at home with his mother and his father, who was a printer. His two older brothers

\*For additional materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 6 / Selection Test 6 / Reading Check 6 / Vocabulary Test 3 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 6



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Drugstore owner Sam Carr catches his employee, Alfred Higgins, stealing from the store and calls the boy's mother. Alfred, often in trouble, is indignant at the accusation and fearful of his mother's "dreadful contempt." What will the

mother's reactions be, and how will those reactions affect the boy?

## PRESENTATION

"All the Years of Her Life" builds to an *epiphany*—a sudden moment of revelation. An adolescent, Alfred Higgins, assumes that his mother is a strong person who will always save him from the consequences of his actions. At the end of

were married and his sister had got married last year, and it would have been all right for his parents now if Alfred had only been able to keep a job.

While Sam Carr smiled and stroked the side of his face very delicately with the tips of his fingers, Alfred began to feel that familiar terror growing in him that had been in him every time he had got into such trouble.

- 5 "I liked you," Sam Carr was saying. "I liked you and would have trusted you, and now look what I got to do." While Alfred watched with his alert, frightened blue eyes, Sam Carr drummed with his fingers on the counter. "I don't like to call a cop in point-blank," he was saying as he looked very worried. "You're a fool, and maybe I should call your father and tell him you're a fool. Maybe I should let them know I'm going to have you locked up."

"My father's not at home. He's a printer. He works nights," Alfred said.

"Who's at home?"

"My mother, I guess."

- "Then we'll see what she says." Sam Carr went to the phone and dialed the number. Alfred was not so much ashamed, but there was that deep fright growing in him, and he blurted out arrogantly, like a strong, full-grown man, "Just a minute. You don't need to draw anybody else in. You don't need to tell 6 her." He wanted to sound like a swaggering, big guy who could look after himself, yet the old, childish hope was in him, the longing that someone at home would come and help him. "Yeah, that's right, he's in trouble," Mr. Carr was saying. "Yeah, your boy works for me. You'd better come down in a hurry." And when he was finished Mr. Carr went over to the door and looked out at the street and watched the people passing in the late summer night. "I'll keep my eye out for a cop," was all he said.

Alfred knew how his mother would come

7 rushing in; she would rush in with her eyes blazing, or maybe she would be crying, and she would push him away when he tried to talk to her, and make him feel her dreadful contempt; yet he longed that she might come before Mr. Carr saw the cop on the beat passing the door.

While they waited—and it seemed a long time—they did not speak, and when at last they heard someone tapping on the closed door, Mr. Carr, turning the latch, said crisply, "Come in, Mrs. Higgins." He looked hard-faced and stern.

Mrs. Higgins must have been going to bed when he telephoned, for her hair was tucked in loosely under her hat, and her hand at her throat held her light coat tightly across her chest so her dress would not show. She came in, large and plump, with a little smile on her friendly face. Most of the store lights had been turned out and at first she did not see Alfred, who was standing in the shadow at the end of 8 the counter. Yet as soon as she saw him she did not look as Alfred thought she would look: she smiled, her blue eyes never wavered, and with a calmness and dignity that made them forget that her clothes seemed to have been thrown on her, she put out her hand to Mr. Carr and said politely, "I'm Mrs. Higgins. I'm Alfred's mother."

9 Mr. Carr was a little embarrassed by her lack of terror and her simplicity, and he hardly knew what to say to her, so she asked, "Is Alfred in trouble?"

"He is. He's been taking things from the store. I caught him red-handed. Little things like compacts and toothpaste and lipsticks. Stuff he can sell easily," the proprietor said.

As she listened Mrs. Higgins looked at Alfred sometimes and nodded her head sadly, and when Sam Carr had finished she said

- 10 gravely, "Is it so, Alfred?"

"Yes."

5

**Characterization.** Sam Carr wavers between calling police and looking for a way to punish boy without involving law. He is kind man who wants to do right thing.

6

**Characterization.** Alfred likes to think of himself as confident and forceful, but depending on "old, childish hope" that he will be helped by "someone at home" suggests his immaturity.

7

**What conflicting feelings does Alfred have? What do these feelings suggest?** Dreads sight of his mother, who will show her disdain for him, but hopes she will come before police so he can stay out of serious trouble. Feelings indicate his childish nature.

8

**Characterization.** Mrs. Higgins' disheveled physical appearance contrasts vividly with her calm and dignified manner. Clothing suggests she may not be as calm as she appears.

9

Mother's self-control causes Mr. Carr to be at a loss for words. She is impressive figure.

10

Mrs. Higgins' question is calm and direct.

the story, a sudden glimpse of his mother's "frightened, broken face" reveals that behind her facade of strength she has been eroding for "all the years of her life." A story that moves toward a climax of revelation is a characteristic kind of modern short story. Exploring "All the

Years of Her Life" should prepare students for other stories that focus on moments of insight and revelation rather than on twists of plot.

You may find that students are impatient with Alfred Higgins and curious about his future. Although Morley Callaghan has ended the story in

a way that is artistically and psychologically right, students may not be entirely satisfied to leave it there. If so, you might take the opportunity for improvisation and role-playing.

## 11

**Diction.** "I guess" qualifications at end of Alfred's comments are evasive; characteristic of speech of guilty child.

## 12

**Characterization.** Alfred recognizes that what he has done is distressing enough to lead mother to rage or tears. Failure to understand how she is showing so much self-control suggests he does not know her well.

## 13

**Why does Mrs. Higgins' tolerance cause Mr. Carr to feel ashamed?** Responses will vary. Her behavior is not what he expected.

## 14

Mr. Carr decides not to bring in law in deference to Mrs. Higgins' calm control of situation.

## 15

So thoroughly has Mrs. Higgins controlled situation that she has made Mr. Carr feel gracious himself.

## 16

**Why is Alfred afraid of his mother's silence?** Feels intimidated; does not know what she is thinking or planning.

"Why have you been doing it?"

11 "I been spending money, I guess."

"On what?"

"Going around with the guys, I guess," Alfred said.

Mrs. Higgins put out her hand and touched Sam Carr's arm with an understanding gentleness, and speaking as though afraid of disturbing him, she said, "If you would only listen to me before doing anything." Her simple earnestness made her shy; her humility made her falter and look away, but in a moment she was smiling gravely again, and she said with a kind of patient dignity, "What did you intend to do, Mr. Carr?"

"I was going to get a cop. That's what I ought to do."

"Yes, I suppose so. It's not for me to say, because he's my son. Yet I sometimes think a little good advice is the best thing for a boy when he's at a certain period in his life," she said.

12 Alfred couldn't understand his mother's quiet composure, for if they had been at home and someone had suggested that he was going to be arrested, he knew she would be in a rage and would cry out against him. Yet now she was standing there with that gentle, pleading smile on her face, saying, "I wonder if you don't think it would be better just to let him come home with me. He looks a big fellow, doesn't he? It takes some of them a long time to get any sense," and they both stared at Alfred, who shifted away with a bit of light shining for a moment on his thin face and the tiny pimples over his cheekbone.

But even while he was turning away uneasily Alfred was realizing that Mr. Carr had become aware that his mother was really a fine woman; he knew that Sam Carr was puzzled by his mother, as if he had expected her to come in and plead with him tearfully, and instead he 13 was being made to feel a bit ashamed by her vast tolerance. While there was only the sound

of the mother's soft, assured voice in the store, Mr. Carr began to nod his head encouragingly at her. Without being alarmed, while being just large and still and simple and hopeful, she was becoming dominant there in the dimly lit store.

14 "Of course, I don't want to be harsh," Mr. Carr was saying, "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll just fire him and let it go at that. How's that?" and he got up and shook hands with Mrs. Higgins, bowing low to her in deep respect.

There was such warmth and gratitude in the way she said, "I'll never forget your kindness," 15 that Mr. Carr began to feel warm and genial himself.

"Sorry we had to meet this way," he said. "But I'm glad I got in touch with you. Just wanted to do the right thing, that's all," he said.

"It's better to meet like this than never, isn't it?" she said. Suddenly they clasped hands as if they liked each other, as if they had known each other a long time. "Good night, sir," she said.

"Good night, Mrs. Higgins. I'm truly sorry," he said.

The mother and son walked along the street together, and the mother was taking a long, firm stride as she looked ahead with her stern face full of worry. Alfred was afraid to speak to her, he was afraid of the silence that was between them, so he only looked ahead too, for the excitement and relief was still pretty strong in him; but in a little while, going along like that in silence made him terribly aware of the strength and the sternness in her; he began to wonder what she was thinking of as she stared ahead so grimly; she seemed to have forgotten that he walked beside her; so when they were passing under the Sixth Avenue elevated<sup>1</sup> and the rumble of the train seemed to break the silence, he said in his old blustering way, "Thank

1. **elevated:** a railway running above the street.

17 God it turned out like that. I certainly won't get in a jam like that again."

"Be quiet. Don't speak to me. You've disgraced me again and again," she said bitterly.

"That's the last time. That's all I'm saying."

"Have the decency to be quiet," she snapped. They kept on their way, looking straight ahead.

When they were at home and his mother took off her coat, Alfred saw that she was really only half dressed, and she made him feel afraid again when she said, without even looking at him, "You're a bad lot. God forgive you. It's one thing after another and always has been. Why do you stand there stupidly? Go to bed, why don't you?" When he was going, she said, "I'm going to make myself a cup of tea. Mind, now, not a word about tonight to your father."

While Alfred was undressing in his bedroom, he heard his mother moving around the kitchen. She filled the kettle and put it on the stove. She moved a chair. And as he listened there was no shame in him, just wonder and a

19 kind of admiration of her strength and repose. He could still see Sam Carr nodding his head encouragingly to her; he could hear her talking simply and earnestly, and as he sat on his bed he felt a pride in her strength. "She certainly was smooth," he thought. "Gee, I'd like to tell her she sounded swell."

And at last he got up and went along to the kitchen, and when he was at the door he saw his mother pouring herself a cup of tea. He 20 watched and he didn't move. Her face, as she sat there, was a frightened, broken face utterly unlike the face of the woman who had been so assured a little while ago in the drugstore. When she reached out and lifted the kettle to pour hot water in her cup, her hand trembled and the water splashed on the stove. Leaning back in the chair, she sighed and lifted the cup to her lips, and her lips were groping loosely as

if they would never reach the cup. She swallowed the hot tea eagerly, and then she straightened up in relief, though the hand holding the cup still trembled. She looked very old.

It seemed to Alfred that this was the way it had been every time he had been in trouble before, that this trembling had really been in her as she hurried out half dressed to the drugstore. He understood why she had sat alone in the kitchen the night his young sister had kept repeating doggedly that she was getting married. Now he felt all that his mother had been thinking of as they walked along the street together a little while ago. He watched his mother, and he never spoke, but at that moment his youth seemed to be over; he knew all the years of her life by the way her hand trembled as she raised the cup to her lips. It seemed to him that this was the first time he had ever looked upon his mother.

## Reading Check

1. What does Mr. Carr accuse Alfred of taking from the store?
2. How does Alfred react to Mr. Carr's accusation?
3. Why is Alfred's father not at home?
4. After speaking to Mrs. Higgins, what does Mr. Carr decide to do about Alfred?
5. What does Alfred's mother do after she sends Alfred to bed?

17

Alfred's declaration seems intended only to win his mother's good graces, with hope that incident will be forgotten.

18

**Characterization.** Mother acts differently once at home; she has lost all tolerance for Alfred's troubles and seems intent only on keeping the problem from her husband to maintain family tranquility.

19

*Is Alfred's admiration of his mother's handling of Mr. Carr an accurate assessment of her character?* No. He saw only calm, external composure. She acted out role to protect her son and her own dignity; hid her anger and confusion.

20

**Characterization.** Frightened woman is the real Mrs. Higgins. Her hand trembles; anguish of her struggles has worn her down.

21

**Characterization.** Alfred has changed, come to new understanding of himself and his mother. He is a dynamic character.

## READING CHECK

1. Compact, lipstick, and toothpaste (p. 70).
2. Pretends to be insulted; becomes defensive (p. 70).
3. Works nights as a printer (p. 71).
4. Fire him and let him go home with his mother (p. 72).
5. Makes tea and sits alone in kitchen (p. 73).



## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Since author uses Alfred as "viewpoint" in telling story, there is reason to think of him as chief character, although title suggests that Alfred's mother is the one author is interested in.

2a. More weak and foolish than bad; depends on people liking him; has left school, but has not been able to hold a job; in general, he is immature, unreliable, sneaky, and dependent. 2b. Makes direct statements about Alfred and characterizes him indirectly through actions, speech, thoughts, feelings, and through other characters' reactions to him.

3a. With friendly smile, calm manner, gentle voice, understanding, dignity, earnestness. 3b. Her wisdom, force of character, skill in handling people.

4a. Supposed she would rush in angrily; instead, her manner with Carr is so flawless that he feels proud of her strength and dignity. 4b. Realizes that she has endured fears and anxieties and that repeated family crises have worn her down.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Alfred becomes aware of his responsibility; insight dispels his ignorance; he can no longer be unaware of cost of his blunders.

2. Not necessarily.

3. Mitty is static character, remains daydreamer.

4. Rainsford, although experiencing feeling of being hunted, does not show that the experience will result in any change.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. There are two major characters in the story: Alfred and his mother. Which one do you think is the main character? One way of answering this question is to identify the climax of the story. Is it Alfred escaping the consequences of his theft, or is it Alfred understanding his mother for the first time?

2a. Explain what sort of person Alfred is.

b. What methods does Callaghan use to characterize him?

3a. How does Alfred's mother handle Mr. Carr? b. What does her handling of the druggist reveal about her?

4. Alfred's mother is seen chiefly through Alfred's eyes. a. How does his understanding of her change? b. How does he see her at the end of the story?

## Literary Elements

### Static and Dynamic Characters

Characters in fiction are often described as **static** or **dynamic**. Static characters remain the same throughout a story, novel, or play. Dynamic characters change in some important way.

- Alfred undergoes an important change at the end of the story. How does insight into his mother's character cause him to change? Consider what this clause means: "at that moment his youth seemed to be over." Does the change necessarily make Alfred a better person?
- 3 Is Walter Mitty in "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" a static or dynamic character? How would you classify Sanger Rainsford in "The Most Dangerous Game"?

## CLOSURE

Ask students to describe Alfred Higgins' attitudes at the beginning of the story and contrast those attitudes with those at the end of the story. Ask them to also contrast the mother's character at the beginning and end.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Informal Language in Dialogue

Dialogue, if it is to sound realistic, must contain language that is characteristic of the speaker and appropriate for his or her audience. In the following quotations from "All the Years of Her Life," the speakers use words that are informal.

Mr. Carr says to Alfred: "What kind of a *sap* do I look like, huh?"

Alfred says to his mother: "I certainly won't get in a *jam* like that again."

- The word *sap* in this context is **slang**—highly informal, colorful language. What word or phrase with a similar meaning might be used in formal or standard writing?

- The word *jam* is **colloquial**—that is, it appears in everyday speech. What is its meaning in this context? Think of another informal word that means the same thing.

## Writing About Literature

### Evaluating Characterization

When Mrs. Higgins appears at Mr. Carr's drugstore, Alfred is surprised by her calmness and dignity. Yet, a few moments after they leave the store, his mother snaps at him and calls him a bad lot. Later on, at home, Alfred sees her broken, frightened face and watches her hand tremble. Can you account for all these aspects of Mrs. Higgins' character? Do you think that Callaghan prepares us to accept the different facets of her character? Write a paragraph evaluating his characterization.

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

In "All the Years of Her Life," there is a moment when Alfred feels that his youth seems to be over. Have students ask their parents or other adults if they can recall a particular time when it seemed as if their youth was over and they faced

new responsibilities. Have volunteers tell about the responses they received.

Have students read either *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson or *A Gathering of Days* by Joan W. Blos and write essays telling how the main characters in these novels came to accept

adult responsibilities. As an alternative, you may wish to have students develop a comparison between Alfred in "All the Years of Her Life" and the main characters in these two stories.

## Descriptive Writing

### ► Creating a Dominant Impression

Alfred begins to understand his mother's inner nature when he watches her pouring herself a cup of tea. Reread the passage on page 73 beginning, "Her face, as she sat there, was a frightened, broken face utterly unlike the face of the woman who had been so assured a little while ago in the drugstore." Note how Callaghan creates a single impression of Alfred's mother through the careful selection of details and through well-chosen modifiers and verbs. Which words are particularly effective?

Write a description of a real or an imaginary person. Convey a dominant impression through details of appearance and actions. Use appropriate verbs and modifiers.

## About the Author

### Morley Callaghan (1903– )



Morley Callaghan was born in Toronto and attended the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall Law School. Between college and law school, he worked as a reporter on the *Toronto Star*.

There he met Ernest Hemingway, who recognized Callaghan's talent and encouraged him to write. Callaghan's first short stories were published in small literary magazines. Later stories appeared in larger, general circulation magazines, such as *The New Yorker*. For nine consecutive years, stories by Callaghan were included in the annual collection *The Best Short Stories*. He has collected some of his stories in two books, *A Native Argosy* and *Now That April's Here*. In addition, he has written several novels, including *Broken Journey*, *More Joy in Heaven*, and *The Many-Colored Coat*. He is considered one of Canada's most distinguished writers.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. "How gullible do you think I am?"
2. Jam in this context means a difficult situation or predicament.
3. Another informal word with this meaning is *fix*. Mess also could be substituted.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Most will agree that Callaghan's characterization of Mrs. Higgins is realistic and well done. Students may point to three facets of Mrs. Higgins revealed in story—the public, the family, and the very private. Students might explain how each of us (and any believable fictional character) possesses these and usually several other personality traits. Apparent contradictions in her behavior help make Mrs. Higgins more, not less, believable.

## DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

Students should note vivid verbs ("reached out," "lifted," "groping," "tumbled," "splashed," "sighted") and modifiers ("frightened, broken," "loosely," "eagerly"). As they write descriptions, encourage students to show their subjects in action. This will help them avoid passive voice and excessive use of forms of the verb to be.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Morley Callaghan was a friend of both Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. His reminiscences of them and other famous writers and artists are included in his book *That Summer in Paris*.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on page 209.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to determine the attitudes and feelings of characters and relate them to the **conflict** between two ways of life. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 86 will give students practice identifying and writing in **dialect** and formal and informal standard English.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Have students cite important technological advances of the last hundred years (i.e., automobile, airplanes, computers). Ask students to consider what their lives would be like without them.

### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote suggests that our initial impression of Pa will change by the end of the story. Ask students to speculate whether the change results from our insight into Pa's nature or from a significant change in Pa's character.

### Split Cherry Tree

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **characterization** and **conflict** in the story.

1

**Conflict.** Story begins with **narrator** facing a problem in which either outcome will be unpleasant.

2

**Is Professor Herbert's punishment fair?** Responses will vary. Professor does not humiliate boy; tries to teach Dave to accept responsibility for his actions.

3

**Characterization.** Professor Herbert and Pa have different attitudes toward whipping. Pa, being old-fashioned, feels it is an effective method until a youngster reaches legal age.

4

**Setting.** Although exact date is not given, reader knows that story is set in time when dollar had much more value than today. During 1930s, many men worked all day for one dollar.

5

Questions that plague Dave are type that run through mind when one deeply regrets doing something and wishes for another chance.

# Split Cherry Tree

**JESSE STUART**

*Sometimes as we come to understand a character in a short story, our initial impressions change. What is your attitude toward Pa when he first appears? Does your attitude change in any way by the end of the story?*

1 "I don't mind staying after school," I says to Professor Herbert, "but I'd rather you'd whip me with a switch and let me go home early. Pa will whip me anyway for getting home two hours late."

"You are too big to whip," says Professor Herbert, "and I have to punish you for climbing up in that cherry tree. You boys knew better than that! The other five boys have paid 2 their dollar each. You have been the only one who has not helped pay for the tree. Can't you borrow a dollar?"

"I can't," I says. "I'll have to take the punishment. I wish it would be quicker punishment. I wouldn't mind."

Professor Herbert stood and looked at me. He was a big man. He wore a gray suit of clothes. The suit matched his gray hair.

"You don't know my father," I says to Professor Herbert. "He might be called a little old-fashioned. He makes us mind him until we're twenty-one years old. He believes: 'If you spare the rod you spoil the child.' I'll never be able to make him understand about the cherry tree. I'm the first of my people to go to high school."

"You must take the punishment," says Pro-

fessor Herbert. "You must stay two hours after school today and two hours after school tomorrow. I am allowing you twenty-five cents an hour. That is good money for a high school student. You can sweep the schoolhouse floor, wash the blackboards, and clean windows. I'll pay the dollar for you."

I couldn't ask Professor Herbert to loan me a dollar. He never offered to loan it to me. I had to stay and help the janitor and work out my fine at a quarter an hour.

5 I thought as I swept the floor: "What will Pa do to me? What lie can I tell him when I go home? Why did we ever climb that cherry tree and break it down for anyway? Why did we run crazy over the hills away from the crowd? Why did we do all of this? Six of us climbed up in a little cherry tree after one little lizard! Why did the tree split and fall with us? It should have been a stronger tree! Why did Eif Crabtree just happen to be below us plowing and catch us in his cherry tree? Why wasn't he a better man than to charge us six dollars for the tree?"

It was six o'clock when I left the schoolhouse. I had six miles to walk home. I would be after seven when I got home. I had all my work



### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Dave Sexton is the only child from his hard-working farm family to go to high school. One day, Professor Herbert makes Dave stay after school as punishment for destroying a farmer's cherry tree while on a field trip. Dave's father, who does

not understand the professor's methods of teaching, is angry that his son's punishment keeps him from helping with the farm chores. The next day, Pa goes to school with Dave to confront the teacher.

### PRESENTATION

Students could begin this story by taking turns reading aloud. After becoming acquainted with the situation, **characters**, and **dialect**, they can complete the reading as a homework assignment.



### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

In this story, the cherry tree is a symbol of something beautiful and productive. The United States is one of the world's leading producers of cherries, of which there are two primary types: sour and sweet. Sour cherries abound in the Great Lakes region and are often frozen or canned. Sweet cherries, which are cultivated in the Pacific Coast states, are perhaps best when consumed fresh; they are also the main source for maraschino cherries. The cherry tree is widely appreciated for the beauty of its flowers, and nowhere more so than in Japan, where cherry blossoms are an important element of any garden.

to do when I got home. It took Pa and me both  
6 to do the work. Seven cows to milk. Nineteen head of cattle to feed, four mules, twenty-five hogs, firewood and stovewood to cut, and water to draw from the well. He would be doing it when I got home. He would be mad and wondering what was keeping me!

7 I hurried home. I would run under the dark, leafless trees. I would walk fast uphill. I would run down the hill. The ground was freezing. I had to hurry. I had to run. I reached the long ridge that led to our cow pasture. I ran along this ridge. The wind dried the sweat on my face. I ran across the pasture to the house.

I threw down my books in the chipyard. I ran to the barn to spread fodder on the

ground for the cattle. I didn't take time to change my clean school clothes for my old work clothes. I ran out to the barn. I saw Pa spreading fodder on the ground to the cattle. That was my job. I ran up to the fence. I says: "Leave that for me, Pa. I'll do it. I'm just a little late."

"I see you are," says Pa. He turned and looked at me. His eyes danced fire. "What in th' world has kept you so? Why ain't you been here to help me with this work? Make a gentleman out'n one boy in th' family and this is what  
8 you get! Send you to high school and you get too onery fer th' buzzards to smell!"

I never said anything. I didn't want to tell why I was late from school. Pa stopped scattering the bundles of fodder. He looked at me.

6

Although Dave's chores seem numerous, children in farm families often have many responsibilities.

7

**Style.** Sentence after sentence begins with *I* plus a verb; style is effective for three reasons: it sounds like actual speech of an unsophisticated boy, emphasizes boy's worry about his troubles, and reinforces boy's haste and urgency.

8

**Dialect.** "Too ornery fer th' buzzards to smell!" refers to someone who thinks he is better than others.

The true-to-life issues and personalities of "Split Cherry Tree" provide fertile fields for thought. The class might consider whether students should be required to pay for damage they cause, whether parents should visit schools when they have doubts about modern methods

of education, and whether Dave is more worried about his father's visit to the high school than they would probably be if their parents visited.

Continue with the questions and exercises provided in the textbook. As students compare and contrast the two ways of life in the story, ask

them if changes in education and life styles are taking place now and to consider whether schools have advantages and improvements over the schools of thirty or sixty years ago. They might also consider whether changes are necessarily for the better and discuss some of the

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

A forested area like the one shown here may have been the kind of area visited by the students in the biology class. Forests such as the one shown here make up fully 30 percent of the land area of the world. (Agricultural land accounts for 24 percent of this; brush-lands, deserts, and developed areas—such as cities—make up the remaining 45 percent.) Forests aid in the control of soil erosion, protect watersheds, and provide a place for physical recreation. Uncontrolled exploitation of forests in the U.S. persisted until the beginning of the twentieth century, when Congress realized the importance of preserving the land for future generations.



**9** What is Dave's motivation for not lying? Fear that Pa will learn truth.

**10** Characterization. Pa does not understand different methods of education; believes reading books is only way to learn.

**11** Characterization. Pa is sensitive to fact his son seems to have been treated unfairly because family is poor; other boys avoided punishment because they could afford to pay for damage.

**12** Conflict. Dave fears Pa will start trouble with Professor Herbert—first suggestion of a possible threat.

He says: "Why are you gettin' in here this time o' night? You tell me or I'll take a hickory withe<sup>1</sup> to you right here on th' spot!"

**9** I says: "I had to stay after school." I couldn't lie to Pa. He'd go to school and find out why I had to stay. If I lied to him it would be too bad for me.

"Why did you haf to stay atter school?" says Pa.

I says: "Our Biology Class went on a field trip today. Six of us boys broke down a cherry tree. We had to give a dollar apiece to pay for

the tree. I didn't have the dollar. Professor Herbert is making me work out my dollar. He gives me twenty-five cents an hour. I had to stay in this afternoon. I'll have to stay in tomorrow afternoon!"

"Are you telling me th' truth?" says Pa.

"I'm telling you the truth," I says. "Go and see for yourself."

"That's jist what I'll do in th' mornin'," says Pa. "Jist whose cherry tree did you break down?"

"Eif Crabtree's cherry tree!"

"What was you doin' clear out in Eif Crabtree's place?" says Pa. "He lives four miles 10 from th' County High School. Don't they teach you no books at that high school? Do they jist let you get out and gad over th' hillsides? If that's all they do I'll keep you at home, Dave. I've got work here fer you to do!"

"Pa," I says, "spring is just getting here. We take a subject in school where we have to have bugs, snakes, flowers, lizards, frogs, and plants. It is Biology. It was a pretty day today. We went out to find a few of these. Six of us boys saw a lizard at the same time sunning on a cherry tree. We all went up the tree to get it. We broke the tree down. It split at the forks. Eif Crabtree was plowing down below us. He ran up the hill and got our names. The other boys gave their dollar apiece. I didn't have mine. Professor Herbert put mine in for me. I have to work it out at school."

**11** "Poor man's son, huh," says Pa. "I'll attend to that myself in th' mornin'. I'll take keer o' 'im. He ain't from this county nohow. I'll go down there in th' mornin' and see 'im. Lettin' you leave your books and gallivant all over th' hills. What kind of a school is it nohow! Didn't do that, my son, when I's a little shaver in school. All fared alike, too."

**12** "Pa, please don't go down there," I says. "Just let me have fifty cents and pay the rest of my fine! I don't want you to go down there! I

1. **withe** (with): a twig or branch.



don't want you to start anything with Professor Herbert!"

"Ashamed of your old Pap, are you, Dave," says Pa, "atter th' way I've worked to raise you! Tryin' to send you to school so you can make a better livin' than I've made.

"I'll straighten this thing out myself! I'll take keer o' Professor Herbert myself! He ain't got no right to keep you in and let the other boys off jist because they've got th' money! I'm a 13 poor man. A bullet will go in a professor same as it will any man. It will go in a rich man same as it will a poor man. Now you get into this work before I take one o'these withes and cut the shirt off'n your back!"

14 I thought once I'd run through the woods above the barn just as hard as I could go. I thought I'd leave high school and home forever! Pa could not catch me! I'd get away! I couldn't go back to school with him. He'd have a gun and maybe he'd shoot Professor Herbert. It was hard to tell what he would do. I could tell Pa that school had changed in the hills from the way it was when he was a boy, but he wouldn't understand. I could tell him we studied frogs, birds, snakes, lizards, flowers, insects. But Pa wouldn't understand. If I did run away from home it wouldn't matter to Pa. He would see Professor Herbert anyway. He would think that high school and Professor Herbert had run me away from home. There was no need to run away. I'd just have to stay, finish foddering the cattle, and go to school with Pa the next morning.

I would take a bundle of fodder, remove the hickory-withe band from around it, and scatter it on rocks, clumps of greenbriers, and brush, so the cattle wouldn't tramp it under their feet. I would lean it up against the oak trees and the rocks in the pasture just above our pigpen on the hill. The fodder was cold and frosty where it had set out in the stacks. I would carry bundles of the fodder from the stack until I had

spread out a bundle for each steer. Pa went to the barn to feed the mules and throw corn in the pen to the hogs.

The moon shone bright in the cold March 15 sky. I finished my work by moonlight. Professor Herbert really didn't know how much work I had to do at home. If he had known he would not have kept me after school. He would have loaned me a dollar to have paid my part on the cherry tree. He had never lived in the hills. He didn't know the way the hill boys had to work so that they could go to school. Now he was teaching in a County High School where all the boys who attended were from hill farms.

After I'd finished doing my work I went to the house and ate my supper. Pa and Mom had eaten. My supper was getting cold. I heard Pa and Mom talking in the front room. Pa was telling Mom about me staying after school.

"I had to do all th' milkin' tonight, chop th' wood myself. It's too hard on me after I've turned ground all day. I'm goin' to take a day off tomorrow and see if I can't remedy things a little. I'll go down to that high school tomorrow. I won't be a very good scholar fer Professor Herbert nohow. He won't keep me in atter school. I'll take a different kind of lesson down there and make 'im acquainted with it."

"Now, Luster," says Mom, "you jist stay away from there. Don't cause a lot o' trouble. You 17 can be jailed fer a trick like that. You'll get th' Law atter you. You'll jist go down there and show off and plague your own boy Dave to death in front o' all th' scholars!"

"Plague or no plague," says Pa, "he don't take into consideration what all I haf to do here, does he? I'll show 'im it ain't right to keep one boy in and let the rest go scot-free. My boy 18 is good as th' rest, ain't he? A bullet will make a hole in a schoolteacher same as it will anybody else. He can't do me that way and get by with it. I'll plug 'im first. I aim to go down there bright and early in the mornin' and get

### 13

*What is the significance of Pa's statement about a bullet? Responses will vary. Pa feels gun can level class distinctions.*

### 14

*Conflict. Boy thinks series of desperate thoughts again; considers running away to avoid embarrassment but copes with internal conflict by facing responsibility.*

### 15

*Boy is confident that if professor knew just how hard he had to work, he would not have kept him after school.*

### 16

*Suspense. Pa's anger coupled with his determination to teach Herbert a lesson creates tension, causes reader to wonder what will happen next.*

### 17

*What arguments does mother give against going to the school? What does this indicate about her? She says Pa could be jailed; Dave will ultimately suffer. Indicates her concern for their welfare.*

### 18

*Characterization. Constant repetition of statement about bullet suggests that Pa sees force as only way of solving problem.*



19

"Poured th'hot lead": shoot with a gun. Pa thinks use of guns is way of doing justice.

20

**Conflict.** Dave leaves Pa but can't bear to be humiliated by father's violence.

21

Father is dressed like a poor farmer, perhaps an embarrassment to Dave.

22

**What does "gone to seed" mean?** Deteriorated, worn out.

23

**Foreshadowing.** Dave's willingness to accept as friends boys he once did not like foreshadows father's changing attitude toward Professor and "bug learning."

24

Professor's initial response is comic. Like a guilty teenager, he qualifies his answer with. "I guess."

all this straight! I aim to see about bug larnin' and this runnin' all over God's creation huntin' snakes, lizards, and frogs. Ransackin' th' country and goin' through cherry orchards and breakin' th' trees down atter lizards! Old Eif Crabtree ought to a-poured th' hot lead to 'em instead o' chargin' six dollars fer th' tree! He ought to a-got old Herbert th' first one!"

I ate my supper. I slipped upstairs and lit the lamp. I tried to forget the whole thing. I studied plane geometry. Then I studied my biology lesson. I could hardly study for thinking about Pa. "He'll go to school with me in the morning. He'll take a gun for Professor Herbert! What will Professor Herbert think of me! I'll tell him when Pa leaves that I couldn't help it. But Pa might shoot him. I hate to go with Pa. Maybe he'll cool off about it tonight and not go in the morning."

Pa got up at four o'clock. He built a fire in the stove. Then he built a fire in the fireplace. He got Mom up to get breakfast. Then he got me up to help feed and milk. By the time we had our work done at the barn, Mom had breakfast ready for us. We ate our breakfast. Daylight came and we could see the bare oak trees covered white with frost. The hills were white with frost. A cold wind was blowing. The sky was clear. The sun would soon come out and melt the frost. The afternoon would be warm with sunshine and the frozen ground would thaw. There would be mud on the hills again. Muddy water would then run down the little ditches on the hills.

"Now, Dave," says Pa, "let's get ready fer school. I aim to go with you this mornin' and look into bug larnin', frog larnin', lizard and snake larnin', and breakin' down cherry trees! I don't like no sicha foolish way o' larnin' myself!"

Pa hadn't forgot. I'd have to take him to school with me. He would take me to school with him. We were going early. I was glad we

were going early. If Pa pulled a gun on Professor Herbert there wouldn't be so many of my classmates there to see him.

I knew that Pa wouldn't be at home in the high school. He wore overalls, big boots, a blue shirt and a sheepskin coat, and a slouched black hat gone to seed at the top. He put his gun in its holster. We started trudging toward the high school across the hill.

It was early when we got to the County High School. Professor Herbert had just got there. I just thought as we walked up the steps into the schoolhouse: "Maybe Pa will find out Professor Herbert is a good man. He just doesn't know him. Just like I felt toward the Lambert boys across the hill. I didn't like them until I'd seen them and talked to them. After I went to school with them and talked to them, I liked them and we were friends. It's a lot in knowing the other fellow."

"You're th' Professor here, ain't you?" says Pa.

"Yes," says Professor Herbert, "and you are Dave's father."

"Yes," says Pa, pulling out his gun and laying it on the seat in Professor Herbert's office. Professor Herbert's eyes got big behind his black-rimmed glasses when he saw Pa's gun. Color came into his pale cheeks.

"Jist a few things about this school I want to know," says Pa. "I'm tryin' to make a scholar out'n Dave. He's the only one out'n eleven youngins I've sent to high school. Here he comes in late and leaves me all th' work to do! He said you's all out bug huntin' yesterday and broke a cherry tree down. He had to stay two hours atter school yesterday and work out money to pay on that cherry tree! Is that right?"

"Wwwwy," says Professor Herbert, "I guess it is."

He looked at Pa's gun.

"Well," says Pa, "this ain't no high school. It's

a bug school, a lizard school, a snake school! It ain't no school nohow!"

"Why did you bring that gun?" says Professor Herbert to Pa.

25 "You see that little hole," says Pa as he picked up the long blue forty-four and put his finger on the end of the barrel, "a bullet can come out'n that hole that will kill a schoolteacher same as it will any other man. It will kill a rich man same as a poor man. It will kill a man. But atter I come in and saw you, I know'd I wouldn't need it. This maul<sup>2</sup> o' mine could do you up in a few minutes."

26 Pa stood there, big, hard, brown-skinned, and mighty, beside of Professor Herbert. I didn't know Pa was so much bigger and harder. I'd never seen Pa in a schoolhouse before. I'd seen Professor Herbert. He always 27 looked big before to me. He didn't look big standing beside of Pa.

"I was only doing my duty, Mr. Sexton," says Professor Herbert, "and following the course of study the state provided us with."

28 "Course o' study," says Pa, "what study, bug study? Varmint study? Takin' youngins to th' woods. Boys and girls all out there together a-gallivantin' in the brush and kickin' up their heels and their poor old Ma's and Pa's at home a-slavin' to keep 'em in school and give 'em a education! You know that's dangerous, too, puttin' a lot o' boys and girls out together like that!"

Students were coming into the schoolhouse now.

Professor Herbert says: "Close the door, Dave, so others won't hear."

I walked over and closed the door. I was shaking like a leaf in the wind. I thought Pa was going to hit Professor Herbert every minute. He was doing all the talking. His face was getting red. The red color was coming through

the brown, weather-beaten skin on Pa's face.

29 "I was right with these students," says Professor Herbert. "I know what they got into and what they didn't. I didn't send one of the other teachers with them on this field trip. I went myself. Yes, I took the boys and girls together. Why not?"

"It jist don't look good to me," says Pa, "a-takin' all this swarm of youngins out to pillage th' whole deestricht. Breakin' down cherry trees. Keepin' boys in atter school."

"What else could I have done with Dave, Mr. Sexton?" says Professor Herbert. "The boys didn't have any business all climbing that cherry tree after one lizard. One boy could have gone up in the tree and got it. The farmer charged us six dollars. It was a little steep, I think, but we had it to pay. Must I make five boys pay and let your boy off? He said he didn't have the dollar and couldn't get it. So I put it in for him. I'm letting him work it out. He's not working for me. He's working for the school!"

30 "I jist don't know what you could a-done with 'im," says Pa, "only a-larruped 'im with a withe! That's what he needed!"

"He's too big to whip," says Professor Herbert, pointing at me. "He's a man in size."

"He's not too big fer me to whip," says Pa. "They ain't too big until they're over twenty-one! It jist didn't look fair to me! Work one and let th' rest out because they got th' money. I don't see what bugs has got to do with a high school! It don't look good to me nohow!"

31 Pa picked up his gun and put it back in its holster. The red color left Professor Herbert's face. He talked more to Pa. Pa softened a little. It looked funny to see Pa in the high school building. It was the first time he'd ever been there.

"We were not only hunting snakes, toads, flowers, butterflies, lizards," says Professor Herbert, "but, Mr. Sexton, I was hunting dry

25

Pa repeats his threats, but now indicates he will not need gun because he could easily beat up professor.

26

Dave begins to see both Pa and Herbert in new light.

27

Dialect. Dave uses colloquial "beside of Pa" rather than "beside Pa."

28

Conflict. Father has difficulty dealing with new ideas about education.

29

Characterization. Professor's calm answer indicates he is professional in manner and has sense of responsibility.

30

Conflict. Professor's explanation of punishment seems fair, but Pa's response is traditional: he would whip a boy who misbehaves. Men have conflicting values.

31

What is the significance of Pa holstering his gun? Because Professor has talked openly with him and listened without condescending, threat of violence is now withdrawn. First turning point of the story.

2. maul: a large, heavy hammer. Pa means his fist.

32

**What is the importance of Professor Herbert's comments about his research?** Science has practical applications that can help farmers. Although it will take Pa a while to grasp this concept, knowledge will help him realize there is value in learning.

33

Pa's skepticism is based on old adage, "seeing is believing."

34

Professor wants to show Pa life at school, where people don't need guns.

35

**Characterization.** Father's reason for staying suggests he is curious person. Curiosity is sign of intelligence.

36

**Description.** Detailed portrait of father standing in schoolyard. Description of Mr. Sexton is tied to nature: "weather-tanned," "color of ripe fodder," "gnarled like the roots of an elm tree" suggesting close connection with natural world.

37

**Characterization.** Student's comment is further reminder that Sexton is alien in this setting.

32 timothy grass to put in an incubator and raise 35 some protozoa."

"I don't know what that is," says Pa. "Th' incubator is th' newfangled way o' cheatin' th' hens and raisin' chickens. I ain't so sure about th' breed o' chickens you mentioned."

"You've heard of germs, Mr. Sexton, haven't you?" says Professor Herbert.

"Jist call me Luster, if you don't mind," says Pa, very casual like.

"All right, Luster, you've heard of germs, haven't you?"

"Yes," says Pa, "but I don't believe in germs."

33 I'm sixty-five years old and I ain't seen one yet!"

"You can't see them with your naked eye," 36

34 says Professor Herbert. "Just keep that gun in the holster and stay with me in the high school today. I have a few things I want to show you. That scum on your teeth has germs in it."

"What," says Pa, "you mean to tell me I've got germs on my teeth!"

"Yes," says Professor Herbert. "The same kind as we might be able to find in a living black snake if we dissect it!"

"I don't mean to dispute your word," says Pa, "but I don't believe it. I don't believe I have germs on my teeth!"

"Stay with me today and I'll show you. I want to take you through the school anyway! School has changed a lot in the hills since you went to school. I don't guess we had high schools in this county when you went to school!"

"No," says Pa, "jist readin', writin', and cipherin'. We didn't have all this bug larnin', frog larnin', and findin' germs on your teeth 37 and in the middle o' black snakes! Th' world's changin'."

"It is," says Professor Herbert, "and we hope all for the better. Boys like your own there are going to help change it. He's your boy. He knows all of what I've told you. You stay with me today."

"I'll shore stay with you," says Pa. "I want to see th' germs off'n my teeth. I jist want to see a germ. I've never seen one in my life. 'Seein' is believin',' Pap allus told me."

Pa walks out of the office with Professor Herbert. I just hoped Professor Herbert didn't have Pa arrested for pulling his gun. Pa's gun has always been a friend to him when he goes to settle disputes.

The bell rang. School took up. I saw the students when they marched in the schoolhouse look at Pa. They would grin and punch each other. Pa just stood and watched them pass in at the schoolhouse door. Two long lines marched in the house. The boys and girls were clean and well dressed. Pa stood over in the schoolyard under a leafless elm, in his sheepskin coat, his big boots laced in front with buckskin, and his heavy socks stuck above his boot tops. Pa's overalls legs were baggy and wrinkled between his coat and boot tops. His blue work shirt showed at the collar. His big black hat showed his gray-streaked black hair. His face was hard and weather-tanned to the color of a ripe fodder blade. His hands were big and gnarled like the roots of the elm tree he stood beside.

When I went to my first class I saw Pa and Professor Herbert going around over the schoolhouse. I was in my geometry class when Pa and Professor Herbert came in the room. We were explaining our propositions on the blackboard. Professor Herbert and Pa just quietly came in and sat down for a while. I heard Fred Wurts whisper to Glenn Armstrong: "Who is that old man? Lord, he's a rough-looking scamp." Glenn whispered back: "I think he's Dave's Pap." The students in geometry looked at Pa. They must have wondered what he was doing in school. Before the class was over, Pa and Professor Herbert got up and went out. I saw them together down on the playground. Professor Herbert was explaining



to Pa. I could see the prints of Pa's gun under his coat when he'd walk around.

At noon in the high school cafeteria Pa and Professor Herbert sat together at the little 40 table where Professor Herbert always ate by himself. They ate together. The students watched the way Pa ate. He ate with his knife instead of his fork. A lot of the students felt sorry for me after they found out he was my 38 father. They didn't have to feel sorry for me. I wasn't ashamed of Pa after I found out he wasn't going to shoot Professor Herbert. I was glad they had made friends. I wasn't ashamed of Pa. I wouldn't be as long as he behaved. He would find out about the high school as I had found out about the Lambert boys across the hill.

In the afternoon when we went to biology Pa was in the class. He was sitting on one of the high stools beside the microscope. We went ahead with our work just as if Pa wasn't in the class. I saw Pa take his knife and scrape tartar from one of his teeth. Professor Herbert put it on the lens and adjusted the microscope for Pa. He adjusted it and worked awhile. Then he says: "Now Luster, look! Put your eye right down to the light. Squint the other eye!"

Pa put his head down and did as Professor 39 Herbert said. "I see 'im," says Pa. "Who'd a ever thought that? Right on a body's teeth! Right in a body's mouth. You're right certain they ain't no fake to this, Professor Herbert?"

"No, 'Luster," says Professor Herbert. "It's there. That's the germ. Germs live in a world we cannot see with the naked eye. We must use the microscope. There are millions of them in our bodies. Some are harmful. Others are helpful."

Pa holds his face down and looks through the microscope. We stop and watch Pa. He sits upon the tall stool. His knees are against the table. His legs are long. His coat slips up behind when he bends over. The handle of his

gun shows. Professor Herbert pulls his coat down quickly.

"Oh, yes," says Pa. He gets up and pulls his coat down. Pa's face gets a little red. He knows about his gun and he knows he doesn't have any use for it in high school.

"We have a big black snake over here we caught yesterday," says Professor Herbert. "We'll chloroform him and dissect him and show you he has germs in his body, too."

"Don't do it," says Pa. "I believe you. I jist don't want to see you kill the black snake. I 41 never kill one. They are good mousers and a lot o' help to us on the farm. I like black snakes.



38

*How does Dave's attitude toward his father reflect his maturity?* Is willing to accept his father as long as he is not violent, an indication Dave is accepting himself and his background.

39

*Characterization.* Pa is amazed when he sees germs through microscope; although skeptical at first, Pa accepts Herbert's word. Pa's attitudes are changing. He is a dynamic character.

40

*Characterization.* When gun accidentally shows, Pa is embarrassed. Further indication Pa is changing.

41

*What is the importance of the father's attitude toward snakes?* Shows he's intelligent, enlightened in some ways.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Although we do not know exactly when the microscope was invented, we do know it was in the first part of the seventeenth century. By 1665 the English physician and philosopher Robert Hooke had written his famous treatise on the microscope, *Micrographia*, which formally introduced the world to the instrument that would forever change the methods of science.

**42**  
**Characterization.** Pa shows sensitivity not anticipated by those who would look down on him.

**43**  
**What is the significance of this simile?** Young students are like growing leaves, but Pa is old man.

**44**  
**Climax.** Pa's acceptance of punishment as proper is final concession to value system of professor.

**45**  
**Metaphor.** Pa's reference to himself as "dead leaf" shows understanding of change and progress.

**46**  
Pa, who until now has seemed crude and potentially violent, adheres to strict value system of fairness and honesty.

**47**  
Pa still has a very strong sense of pride.

**48**  
**Resolution.** Pa knows instinctively that he has friend in Professor Herbert; both men are open and willing to be understanding and forgiving.

I jist hate to see people kill 'em. I don't allow 'em killed on my place."

**42** The students look at Pa. They seem to like him better after he said that. Pa with a gun in his pocket but a tender heart beneath his ribs for snakes, but not for man! Pa won't whip a mule at home. He won't whip his cattle.

"Man can defend hisself," says Pa, "but cattle and mules can't. We have the drop on 'em. Ain't nothin' to a man that'll beat a good pullin' mule. He ain't got th' right kind o' a heart!"

Professor Herbert took Pa through the laboratory. He showed him the different kinds of work we were doing. He showed him our equipment. They stood and talked while we worked. Then they walked out together. They talked louder when they got out in the hall.

When our biology class was over I walked out of the room. It was our last class for the day. I would have to take my broom and sweep two hours to finish paying for the split cherry tree. I just wondered if Pa would want me to stay. He was standing in the hallway watching the students march out. He looked lost among **43** us. He looked like a leaf turned brown on the tree among the treetops filled with growing leaves.

I got my broom and started to sweep. Professor Herbert walked up and says: "I'm going to let you do that some other time. You can go home with your father. He is waiting out there."

I laid my broom down, got my books, and went down the steps.

Pa says: "Ain't you got two hours o' sweepin' yet to do?"

I says: "Professor Herbert said I could do it some other time. He said for me to go home with you."

**44** "No," says Pa. "You are goin' to do as he says. He's a good man. School has changed from my **45** day and time. I'm a dead leaf, Dave. I'm be-

hind. I don't belong here. If he'll let me I'll get a broom and we'll both sweep one hour. That pays your debt. I'll hep you pay it. I'll ast 'im and see if he won't let me hep you."

"I'm going to cancel the debt," says Professor Herbert. "I just wanted you to understand, Luster."

"I understand," says Pa, "and since I understand, he must pay his debt fer th' tree and I'm goin' to hep 'im."

"Don't do that," says Professor Herbert. "It's all on me."

**46** "We don't do things like that," says Pa, "we're just and honest people. We don't want somethin' fer nothin'. Professor Herbert, you're wrong now and I'm right. You'll haf to listen to me. I've larned a lot from you. My boy must go on. Th' world has left me. It changed while I've raised my family and plowed th' **47** hills. I'm a just and honest man. I don't skip debts. I ain't larned 'em to do that. I ain't got much larnin' myself but I do know right from wrong attar I see through a thing."

Professor Herbert went home. Pa and I stayed and swept one hour. It looked funny to see Pa use a broom. He never used one at home. Mom used the broom. Pa used the plow. Pa did hard work. Pa says: "I can't sweep. Durned if I can. Look at th' streaks o' dirt I leave on th' floor! Seems like no work atall fer me. Brooms is too light'r somethin'. I'll jist do th' best I can, Dave. I've been wrong about th' school."

I says: "Did you know Professor Herbert can get a warrant out for you for bringing your pistol to school and showing it in his office! They can railroad<sup>3</sup> you for that!"

**48** "That's all made right," says Pa. "I've made that right. Professor Herbert ain't goin' to take it to court. He likes me. I like 'im. We jist had to

3. **railroad:** slang for "send someone to prison on false charges."

get together. He had the remedies. He showed me. You must go on to school. I am as strong a man as ever come out'n th' hills fer my years and th' hard work I've done. But I'm behind,

49 Dave. I'm a little man. Your hands will be softer than mine. Your clothes will be better. You'll allus look cleaner than your old Pap. Jist remember, Dave, to pay your debts and be honest. Jist be kind to animals and don't bother th' snakes. That's all I got agin th' school. Puttin' black snakes to sleep and cuttin' 'em open."

It was late when we got home. Stars were in the sky. The moon was up. The ground was frozen. Pa took his time going home. I couldn't run like I did the night before. It was ten o'clock before we got the work finished, our suppers eaten. Pa sat before the fire and told

50 Mom he was going to take her and show her a germ sometime. Mom hadn't seen one either. Pa told her about the high school and the fine man Professor Herbert was. He told Mom about the strange school across the hill and how different it was from the school in their day and time.

### Reading Check

1. Why does Dave have to stay after school?
2. How does Professor Herbert first react to Pa and his gun?
3. What does Pa suggest would be the appropriate punishment for Dave?
4. Why does Pa stay at the school all day?
5. Who helps Dave pay his debt to the school?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. There are several conflicts in "Split Cherry Tree." The students get into trouble with Farmer Crabtree. Dave has difficulties with both Professor Herbert and his father. Pa confronts Professor Herbert. But the most important conflict is between two ways of life. Explain how the following sentence sums up the central conflict: "He looked like a leaf turned brown on the tree among the treetops filled with growing leaves."

2. A static character remains the same while a dynamic character changes in some significant way. The story that "Split Cherry Tree" tells is essentially about how Pa changes. Does Pa simply change his ideas or does he change in some deeper way? Explain.

3. Professor Herbert does not change, but your attitude toward him probably changes as you read the story. At the beginning he seems stiff and overbearing as he tells Dave, "You must take the punishment. You must stay two hours after school today and two hours after school tomorrow." Then he seems cowardly when he sees Pa's gun and his eyes widen. Point out later speeches and actions that change your initial impression of him.

4. How is the basic conflict of the story resolved?

49

Pa still demands his son accept his value system, while admitting that world is changing around him and seeing value of education and progress.

50

**Characterization.** Pa has learned from his experiences and has undergone a significant change; accepts new learning.

### READING CHECK

1. To work off debt (p. 76).
2. Is frightened (p. 80).
3. A whipping (p. 81).
4. Becomes interested in seeing germs (p. 82).
5. Pa (p. 84).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Brown leaf symbolizes Pa's generation of hillfolk; green leaves symbolize younger generation. Pa represents a tradition that is obsolete and realizes that toil of uneducated people will be supplanted by applied skills and knowledge of the educated.
2. Pa comes to understand that his son and other educated young people will live a very different life from his own. Change is deeper than simple turnabout in attitude. As he becomes less violent, more accepting, Pa grows in moral stature.
3. He calmly faces Pa despite his fear. Explanation of punishment shows that he has been fair. Gentle treatment of Pa shows him to be a man of broad sympathies. Students might also cite speech about changing world (p. 82) and canceling debt (p. 84).
4. Pa realizes that many aspects of life are changing because schools are giving young people an opportunity to acquire new and valuable knowledge. At same time, Pa preserves old values that he believes are worth passing on.



## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. "Make a gentleman . . . to smell!" (p. 77).  
"Ashamed of . . . than I've made" (p. 79).  
"A bullet . . . any man" (p. 79).  
"I'll take keer . . . no how" (p. 79).  
"He can't do me . . . plug 'em first" (p. 79).  
"I aim to see . . . and frogs" (p. 80).
2. Pulling coat over gun shows he is beginning to be ashamed of his threats of violence.  
Attitude toward animals shows a gentle side of his nature.  
Clumsy attempts to use broom reveal his vulnerability and understanding of his own limitations.  
Pa's speeches show that he accepts his own obsolescence: "School has changed . . ."; "Th' world has left me"; and "You must go on to school."

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. Professor Herbert.
2. Pa, Dave.
3. Different levels of language support central conflict and theme of story: the different worlds of Professor Herbert and Pa, with Dave caught in the middle.
4. An example of informal standard speech is Dave's narration in passage beginning "After I'd" and ending "after school" (p. 79). Dave's narration shows that he is in the process of becoming a better-educated person than his father. Passage beginning "I'll take keer . . ." (p. 78) might be rewritten in formal English as follows:  
'I will take care of him. He is not from this country anyway. I shall go down to the school tomorrow morning and see him. I shall ask him why he lets you have your books and frolic everywhere in

## Literary Elements

### Complex Characterization

Perhaps you have known people who at first seemed cold and aloof, perhaps snobbish. After you got to know them better, you found they were actually warm and friendly. Their coldness was a mask for their shyness. Thus, as you learned more about them, your attitude toward them changed.

You sometimes go through this same process as you read a story or a novel. At the beginning, a character seems one kind of person. As you continue to read, you learn more about the character and your first impressions are modified. The writer has deliberately controlled your reaction by giving certain information at the beginning of the story and other information later on.

- In "Split Cherry Tree" your attitude toward Pa changes as different facets of his character are revealed. When Dave tells Pa about the punishment and when Dave overhears Pa talking to Mom, Pa seems a stern, narrow-minded, **1** violent man. Point out speeches by Pa that contribute to this impression.

- Later in the story, Professor Herbert convinces Pa of the value of an education and other aspects of Pa's character emerge. How **2** do the following incidents change your attitude toward Pa?

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| Pa pulling down his coat over the gun             | (page 83)     |
| Pa's attitude toward snakes, mules, and cattle    | (pages 83–84) |
| Pa's attempt to use a broom                       | (page 84)     |
| Pa's changed opinion of the value of an education | (page 85)     |

## CLOSURE

Ask students to contrast Pa's attitude toward school at the beginning and the end of the story. Help them understand the interdependent relationship between Pa's **character** and the central **conflict** in the story.

The terms **flat** and **round** are sometimes used in distinguishing characters. A **flat character** is one-sided and often represents a stereotype. A **round character**, like Pa, is presented in depth from many angles.

As you learn more about Pa, you become an active participant in the story. Just as Pa's understanding of education and the modern world increases, so your understanding of him grows until he seems much more than a simple backwoods farmer. By the end of the story, you have come to know and appreciate a complex, many-sided character who has demonstrated the capacity to learn and change.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Identifying Levels of Language

- Jesse Stuart uses three levels of language to tell his story. Some passages are written in **formal standard** English, such as a person would use in a textbook, a business letter, or a formal speech. Some passages are in **informal standard** English, such as an educated person would use when speaking or in a friendly letter. Still other passages are in **dialect**, the special language of a specific region or group of people. Dave tells the story mostly in informal English, although he sometimes lapses into dialect. Which character tends to use formal English? Which character uses dialect? Why is it important in this particular story that different characters use different levels of language? Find several examples of each level of language. Then take a passage written in dialect and rewrite it either as formal or informal English.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

If yours is an urban school, find out if anyone on the faculty has taught in a rural school and would be willing to share some of his or her experiences with your class. If yours is a rural school, invite a teacher who has been associated

with rural schools for many years to discuss how these schools have changed.

Students may want to read Jesse Stuart's other books about his experiences as a schoolteacher in rural communities: *The Thread That Runs So True* and *Beyond Dark Hills*.

The 1977 Canadian film *Why Shoot the Teacher?* concerns a young teacher's experiences in a rural school district in Saskatchewan during the Depression. The film is available on videocassette, and students might enjoy seeing it.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Discussing Central Ideas

Two central ideas run through this story: the idea of change from old ways to new, and the idea of peace through understanding. Tell how these ideas are developed and what connection is made between them in the story.

### ► Exploring a Character's Nature

In "Split Cherry Tree" you see Pa at first as he *seems* to be. As the story unfolds, you come to understand his inner character. "All the Years of Her Life" (page 70) presents Mrs. Higgins at first as a confident woman who impresses Mr. Carr and then as the disconsolate mother alone in her kitchen. Choose one of these characters or a character in another story you have read and explore the contrasts in that character's nature.

## About the Author

### Jesse Stuart (1907–1984)



Jesse Stuart once said of himself, "I've always wanted to be a writer. I have fought for it; I have dreamed of it."

He was born in a log cabin near Riverton, Kentucky. He attended a one-room county school and then a county high school between periods of work on farms. He put himself through Lincoln Memorial University in Tennessee by working at various jobs, including one in a stone quarry and another in a restaurant kitchen. After college, he became a teacher and then principal of a county high school. His first book was a collection of poems, *Man with a Bull Tongue Plow* (1934). His stories appeared in many magazines, and he published several novels. One of his best-known books is *The Thread That Runs So True*, an account of his experiences as a teacher in Kentucky and Ohio.

the hills. What kind of school is that one anyway? We did not behave in such a manner, my son, when I was a little boy in school. All students were treated equally, too." (Such a speech would be completely out of character for Pa and would damage his story.)

### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Each of these topics deals with themes that are central not only to literature but also to human-kind. You might use one of the suggestions listed as an essay test.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jesse Stuart's Kentucky background is at the heart of most of his writing. The people of the rural areas of the state frequently provide models for characters in his fiction. He has also written several nonfiction accounts of his experiences there.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the actions, dialogue, inner **conflicts**, and motives of the two main **characters** in "A Mother in Mannville." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language** and **Vocabulary** exercise on p. 94 will give students practice in tracing the origins of related words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

This story presents two completely realized and complex characters. The narrator reveals as much about herself as she does about the boy Jerry. Before reading the story, review direct and indirect methods of characterization.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the **narrator** and how well she understands, or thinks she understands, Jerry. You may want to discuss "integrity" and ask students to share experiences in which integrity played a role.

# A Mother in Mannville

**MARJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS**

*You have seen that characters in stories can be complex and that your reactions to them may change as you come to understand them. What do you come to know about the narrator in this story? Does she understand the boy Jerry as well as you, the reader, do?*

## A Mother in Mannville

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding a discussion of the characters and their motives.

1

**What is the importance of the opening paragraphs to the story?** Set mood for story about a lonely boy. Orphanage is cut off from rest of world, and cold leads to Jerry's first comments about pair of gloves, which are an important symbol in the story.

2

**What is the significance of the dog's not barking?** Jerry has an easy way with animals; dog instinctively trusts him.

3

**Characterization.** Boy has an easy confidence in his own skill even though narrator has doubts about him because of his size and appearance.

The orphanage is high in the Carolina mountains. Sometimes in winter the snowdrifts are so deep that the institution is cut off from the village below, from all the world. Fog hides the mountain peaks, the snow swirls down the valleys, and a wind blows so bitterly that the orphanage boys who take the milk twice daily to the baby cottage reach the door with fingers stiff in an agony of numbness.

"Or when we carry trays from the cookhouse for the ones that are sick," Jerry said, "we get our faces frostbit, because we can't put our 1 hands: over them. I have gloves," he added. 2 "Some of the boys don't have any."

He liked the late spring, he said. The rhododendron was in bloom, a carpet of color, across the mountainsides, soft as the May winds that stirred the hemlocks. He called it laurel.

"It's pretty when the laurel blooms," he said. "Some of it's pink and some of it's white."

I was there in the autumn. I wanted quiet, isolation, to do some troublesome writing. I wanted mountain air to blow out the malaria from too long a time in the subtropics. I was homesick, too, for the flaming of maples in Oc-

tober, and for corn shocks and pumpkins and black-walnut trees and the lift of hills. I found them all, living in a cabin that belonged to the orphanage, half a mile beyond the orphanage farm. When I took the cabin, I asked for a boy or man to come and chop wood for the fireplace. The first few days were warm, I found what wood I needed about the cabin, no one came, and I forgot the order.

I looked up from my typewriter one late afternoon, a little startled. A boy stood at the door, and my pointer dog, my companion, was at his side and had not barked to warn me. The boy was probably twelve years old, but undersized. He wore overalls and a torn shirt, and was barefooted.

He said, "I can chop some wood today."

I said, "But I have a boy coming from the orphanage."

"I'm the boy."

"You? But you're small."

"Size don't matter, chopping wood," he said.

3 "Some of the big boys don't chop good. I've been chopping wood at the orphanage a long time."

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 8 / Selection Test 8 / Reading Check 8 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 8



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The narrator recalls the autumn she spent writing in a cabin near an orphanage in the Carolina mountains. Jerry, an undersized orphan of twelve, is sent to chop wood for her. Jerry becomes attached to the narrator and her dog

and comes daily to talk and do small chores. When the writer leaves for a weekend, she gives Jerry a key to the cabin so that he can care for the dog. Upon her return, she is not quite prepared for what she learns from Jerry.

## PRESENTATION

The events of the narrative do not proceed in exact chronological order. You might prepare students for this by telling them that the narrator's first meeting with Jerry actually occurs in autumn.

I visualized mangled and inadequate branches for my fires. I was well into my work and not inclined to conversation. I was a little blunt.

"Very well. There's the ax. Go ahead and see what you can do."

I went back to work, closing the door. At first the sound of the boy dragging brush annoyed me. Then he began to chop. The blows were rhythmic and steady, and shortly I had forgotten him, the sound no more of an interruption than a consistent rain. I suppose an hour and a half passed, for when I stopped and stretched, and heard the boy's steps on the cabin stoop, the sun was dropping behind the farthest mountain, and the valleys were purple with something deeper than the asters.

The boy said, "I have to go to supper now. I can come again tomorrow evening."

I said, "I'll pay you now for what you've done," thinking I should probably have to insist on an older boy. "Ten cents an hour?"

"Anything is all right."

We went together back of the cabin. An astonishing amount of solid wood had been cut. There were cherry logs and heavy roots of rhododendron, and blocks from the waste pine and oak left from the building of the cabin.

"But you've done as much as a man," I said. "This is a splendid pile."

I looked at him, actually, for the first time.

His hair was the color of the corn shocks and his eyes, very direct, were like the mountain sky when rain is pending—gray, with a shadowing of that miraculous blue. As I spoke, a light came over him, as though the setting sun had touched him with the same suffused glory with which it touched the mountains. I gave him a quarter.

"You may come tomorrow," I said, "and thank you very much."

He looked at me, and at the coin, and



seemed to want to speak, but could not, and turned away.

"I'll split kindling tomorrow," he said over his thin ragged shoulder. "You'll need kindling and medium wood and logs and backlogs."

At daylight I was half wakened by the sound of chopping. Again it was so even in texture that I went back to sleep. When I left my bed in the cool morning, the boy had come and gone, and a stack of kindling was neat against the cabin wall. He came after school in the afternoon and worked until time to return to the orphanage. His name was Jerry; he was twelve years old, and he had been at the orphanage since he was four. I could picture him at four, with the same grave gray-blue eyes and the same—independence? No, the word that comes to me is "integrity."

The word means something very special to

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

When the pent-up forces beneath the earth's surface reach the breaking point, the crust is bent into a series of folds—and mountains are born. The Appalachian Mountains in eastern North America are a combined product of such uplift and subsequent erosion. They are ancient mountains, worn down through the ages, with few peaks exceeding 5,500 feet. Rivers have cut gentle valleys throughout the region, and an extensive variety of vegetation thrives on the mountainsides.

4

*What is the significance of the sound of the blows?* Boy works in disciplined fashion—steadily and consistently, not hacking or slashing at wood he is splitting.

5

*Characterization.* Boy's response to offer shows that he is not demanding or selfish.

6

*Imagery.* Description of Jerry contains images associated with nature ("corn shucks," "mountain sky," "rain," "setting sun"). Suggests Jerry is wholesome, natural.

7

*Characterization.* Narrator assumes Jerry has integrity because he does his work with care and commitment.

Students have learned that writers often create their own **symbols**. Have students note the importance of *gloves* in this story. At the opening of the story, Jerry tells the narrator that unlike some of the boys at the orphanage, he has gloves to protect him from frostbite. Toward the

end of the story, Jerry tells the narrator that he wants to buy his mother a pair of white gloves. Ask students what the gloves in the story might symbolize.

A key word in the story is *integrity*, utter sincerity and honesty. The narrator thinks that Jerry

has integrity. However, at the end of the story, we learn that Jerry has lied about having a mother. The pivotal question is whether this means that the narrator has been mistaken in her judgment of Jerry's character. Ask students to consider Jerry's motivation for telling lies.

8

**Characterization.** Jerry does not make excuses for himself; he readily assumes responsibility for the broken ax handle.

9

**Characterization.** In finding dry place for wood and in repairing loose stone in walk, Jerry shows concern for narrator's welfare.

10

**Why does Jerry make up excuses to talk with the narrator?** Is starved for friendship; narrator realizes this (as analogy to physical hunger suggests) but does not know its extent.

11

**Characterization.** Jerry shows his respect for narrator's need for isolation and his sensitivity to her feelings by waiting until she has stopped working.

12

**Hint of boy's presence after he is gone may suggest he is especially warm and memorable.**

13

**Characterization.** Boy goes beyond call of duty in taking care of narrator's dog, again demonstrating a caring attitude.

me, and the quality for which I use it is a rare one. My father had it—there is another of whom I am almost sure—but almost no man of my acquaintance possesses it with the clarity, the purity, the simplicity of a mountain stream. But the boy Jerry had it. It is bedded on courage, but it is more than brave. It is honest, but it is more than honesty. The ax handle broke one day. Jerry said the woodshop at the orphanage would repair it. I brought money to pay for the job and he refused it.

8 "I'll pay for it," he said. "I broke it. I brought the ax down careless."

"But no one hits accurately every time," I told him. "The fault was in the wood of the handle. I'll see the man from whom I bought it."

It was only then that he would take the money. He was standing back of his own carelessness. He was a free-will agent and he chose to do careful work, and if he failed, he took the responsibility without subterfuge.<sup>1</sup>

And he did for me the unnecessary thing, the gracious thing, that we find done only by the great of heart. Things no training can teach, for they are done on the instant, with no predicated<sup>2</sup> experience. He found a cubbyhole beside the fireplace that I had not noticed.

9 There, of his own accord, he put kindling and "medium" wood, so that I might always have dry fire material ready in case of sudden wet weather. A stone was loose in the rough walk to the cabin. He dug a deeper hole and steadied it, although he came, himself, by a short cut over the bank. I found that when I tried to return his thoughtfulness with such things as candy and apples, he was wordless. "Thank you" was, perhaps, an expression for which he had had no use, for his courtesy was instinctive. He only looked at the gift and at me, and a curtain lifted, so that I saw deep into the clear

well of his eyes, and gratitude was there, and affection, soft over the firm granite of his character.

10 He made simple excuses to come and sit with me. I could no more have turned him away than if he had been physically hungry. I suggested once that the best time for us to visit was just before supper, when I left off my writing. 11 After that, he waited always until my typewriter had been some time quiet. One day I worked until nearly dark. I went outside the cabin, having forgotten him. I saw him going up over the hill in the twilight toward the orphanage. When I sat down on my stoop, a place was warm from his body where he had been sitting.

He became intimate, of course, with my pointer, Pat. There is a strange communion between a boy and a dog. Perhaps they possess the same singleness of spirit, the same kind of wisdom. It is difficult to explain, but it exists. When I went across the state for a weekend, I left the dog in Jerry's charge. I gave him the dog whistle and the key to the cabin, and left sufficient food. He was to come two or three times a day and let out the dog, feed and exercise him. I should return Sunday night, and Jerry would take out the dog for the last time Sunday afternoon and then leave the key under an agreed hiding place.

My return was belated and fog filled the mountain passes so treacherously that I dared not drive at night. The fog held the next morning, and it was Monday noon before I reached the cabin. The dog had been fed and cared for that morning. Jerry came early in the afternoon, anxious.

"The superintendent said nobody would drive in the fog," he said. "I came just before bedtime last night and you hadn't come. So I brought Pat some of my breakfast this morning. I wouldn't have let anything happen to him."

1. **subterfuge** (sūb'tar-fyōōj'): deception.

2. **predicated** (prēd'ā-kāt'əd): established.

14 "I was sure of that. I didn't worry."

"When I heard about the fog, I thought you'd know."

He was needed for work at the orphanage and he had to return at once. I gave him a dollar in payment, and he looked at it and went away. But that night he came in the darkness and knocked at the door.

"Come in, Jerry," I said, "if you're allowed to be away this late."

15 "I told maybe a story," he said. "I told them I thought you would want to see me."

"That's true," I assured him, and I saw his relief. "I want to hear about how you managed with the dog."

He sat by the fire with me, with no other light, and told me of their two days together. The dog lay close to him, and found a comfort there that I did not have for him. And it seemed to me that being with my dog, and caring for him, had brought the boy and me, too, together, so that he felt that he belonged to me as well as to the animal.

"He stayed right with me," he told me, "except when he ran in the laurel. He likes the laurel. I took him up over the hill and we both ran fast. There was a place where the grass was high and I lay down in it and hid. I could hear Pat hunting for me. He found my trail and he barked. When he found me, he acted crazy, and he ran around and around me, in circles."

We watched the flames.

"That's an apple log," he said. "It burns the prettiest of any wood."

We were very close.

He was suddenly impelled to speak of things he had not spoken of before, nor had I cared to ask him.

"You look a little bit like my mother," he said. "Especially in the dark, by the fire."

"But you were only four, Jerry, when you came here. You have remembered how she looked, all these years?"

"My mother lives in Mannville," he said.

For a moment, finding that he had a mother shocked me as greatly as anything in my life has ever done, and I did not know why it disturbed me. Then I understood my distress. I was filled with a passionate resentment that any woman should go away and leave her son. A fresh anger added itself. A son like this one—The orphanage was a wholesome place, the executives were kind, good people, the food was more than adequate, the boys were healthy, a ragged shirt was no hardship, nor the doing of clean labor. Granted, perhaps, that the boy felt no lack, what blood fed the

17

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Have students imagine they are hiking in the mountains when a sudden cloudburst forces them to seek shelter inside an old, deserted cabin. Ask students to write a descriptive paragraph of what they might discover that would tell them about the people who once lived there. Encourage students to include images that appeal to each of the five senses.

14

**Characterization.** Adult and boy both know that boy is responsible and dependable. Woman did not worry; boy expected that she would not.

15

Boy worries about having told a lie in saying that writer wanted to talk to him. But she does, in fact, enjoy his company and wants to know how he managed with dog.

16

Warm relationship between boy and dog brings him even closer emotionally to the woman.

17

Narrator resents a mother who could neglect such a son; her own maternal feelings for him are simultaneously revealed. Later, she too "deserts" him.





18

Narrator's curiosity about circumstances of boy's separation from his mother is tempered by sensitivity to boy's feelings.

19

**Symbol.** This series of imaginary gifts represents what is missing in the boy's life, especially the frivolous skates.

20

**Why do you think the boy chose gloves as a present?** Responses will vary. Gloves are a symbol of protection; boys at orphanage who lack them suffer from cold.

21

Narrator again draws comparison between physical and emotional hunger.

22

As a writer, narrator must satisfy her curiosity about why mother would abandon such a child.

23

**Simile.** Suggests inconstancy, flightiness of mental focus.

24

**Irony.** Writer is too busy to follow up on her promise to herself; suggests guilt at being—as she envisioned boy's mother—unconcerned.

bowels<sup>3</sup> of a woman who did not yearn over this child's lean body that had come in parturition<sup>4</sup> out of her own? At four he would have looked the same as now. Nothing, I thought, nothing in life could change those eyes. His quality must be apparent to an idiot, a fool. I burned with questions I could not ask. In any,

18 I was afraid, there would be pain.

"Have you seen her, Jerry—lately?"

"I see her every summer. She sends for me."

I wanted to cry out, "Why are you not with her? How can she let you go away again?"

He said, "She comes up here from Mannville whenever she can. She doesn't have a job now."

His face shone in the firelight.

19 "She wanted to give me a puppy, but they can't let any one boy keep a puppy. You remember the suit I had on last Sunday?" He was plainly proud. "She sent me that for Christmas. The Christmas before that"—he drew a long breath, savoring the memory—"she sent me a pair of skates."

"Roller skates?"

My mind was busy, making pictures of her, trying to understand her. She had not, then, entirely deserted or forgotten him. But why, then—I thought, "I must not condemn her without knowing."

"Roller skates. I let the other boys use them.

They're always borrowing them. But they're careful of them."

What circumstances other than poverty—

"I'm going to take the dollar you gave me for taking care of Pat," he said, "and buy her a pair of gloves."

20 I could only say, "That will be nice. Do you know her size?"

"I think it's 8½," he said.

3. **bowels:** an archaic meaning. The bowels were once believed to be the seat of pity.

4. **parturition** (pär'tyoō-rish'ən, pär'choō-, pär'toō-): childbirth.

He looked at my hands.

"Do you wear 8½?" he asked.

"No. I wear a smaller size, a 6."

"Oh! Then I guess her hands are bigger than yours."

I hated her. Poverty or no, there was other food than bread, and the soul could starve as quickly as the body. He was taking his dollar to buy gloves for her big stupid hands, and she lived away from him, in Mannville, and contented herself with sending him skates.

"She likes white gloves," he said. "Do you think I can get them for a dollar?"

"I think so," I said.

22 I decided that I should not leave the mountains without seeing her and knowing for myself why she had done this thing.

23 The human mind scatters its interests as though made of thistledown, and every wind stirs and moves it. I finished my work. It did not please me, and I gave my thoughts to another field. I should need some Mexican material.

I made arrangements to close my Florida place. Mexico immediately, and doing the writing there, if conditions were favorable. Then, Alaska with my brother. After that, heaven knew what or where.

I did not take time to go to Mannville to see Jerry's mother, nor even to talk with the orphanage officials about her. I was a trifle abstracted about the boy, because of my work and plans. And after my first fury at her—we did not speak of her again—his having a mother, any sort at all, not far away, in Mannville, relieved me of the ache I had about him. He did not question the anomalous<sup>5</sup> relation. He was not lonely. It was none of my concern.

He came every day and cut my wood and did

5. **anomalous** (ə-nōm'ə-ləs): irregular; abnormal.

Write the headings *Narrator* and *Jerry* on the chalkboard and ask students to contribute characteristics under each heading and tell how each characteristic is represented in the story.

small helpful favors and stayed to talk. The days had become cold, and often I let him come inside the cabin. He would lie on the floor in front of the fire, with one arm across the pointer, and they would both doze and wait quietly for me. Other days they ran with a common *ecstasy* through the laurel, and since the asters were not gone, he brought me back vermilion maple leaves, and chestnut boughs dripping with *imperial* yellow. I was ready to go.

25 I said to him, "You have been my friend, Jerry. I shall often think of you and miss you. Pat will miss you too. I am leaving tomorrow."

26 He did not answer. When he went away, I remember that a new moon hung over the mountains, and I watched him go in silence up the hill. I expected him the next day, but he did not come. The details of packing my personal belongings, loading my car, arranging the bed over the seat, where the dog would ride, occupied me until late in the day. I closed the cabin and started the car, noticing that the sun was in the west and I should do well to be out of the mountains by nightfall. I stopped by the orphanage and left the cabin key and money for my light bill with Miss Clark.

"And will you call Jerry for me to say goodbye to him?"

"I don't know where he is," she said. "I'm afraid he's not well. He didn't eat his dinner this noon. One of the other boys saw him going over the hill into the laurel. He was supposed to fire the boiler this afternoon. It's not like him; he's unusually reliable."

I was almost relieved, for I knew I should never see him again, and it would be easier not to say goodbye to him.

I said, "I wanted to talk with you about his mother—why he's here—but I'm in more of a hurry than I expected to be. It's out of the question for me to see her now too. But here's

some money I'd like to leave with you to buy things for him at Christmas and on his birthday. It will be better than for me to try to send him things. I could so easily duplicate—skates, for instance."

She blinked her honest spinster's eyes.

"There's not much use for skates here," she said.

Her stupidity annoyed me.

"What I mean," I said, "is that I don't want to duplicate things his mother sends him. I might have chosen skates if I didn't know she had already given them to him."

She stared at me.

27 "I don't understand," she said. "He has no mother. He has no skates."

## Reading Check

1. At what season does the story open?
2. Why does the narrator go to a cabin in the Carolina mountains?
3. Why does Jerry come to the narrator's cabin?
4. What does Jerry say he will do with the money he has earned for taking care of the dog?
5. How does the narrator find out that Jerry has lied about his mother?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

- 1a. What is the narrator's first impression of Jerry? b. How does the narrator's attitude toward Jerry change during the course of the story?
- 2a. In what way is the relationship that develops between Jerry and the narrator a mother-

25

**Climax.** Narrator's pleasant comments to boy are more devastating than she could possibly realize.

26

Boy's despair is suggested in brief comment: "He did not answer." He is losing his surrogate mother—his only mother.

27

Conclusion suggests that boy, in his desperate need to have a mother who loves him, fabricated one in his imagination.

### READING CHECK

1. Autumn (p. 88).
2. Wants a quiet place to write (p. 88).
3. Is sent to cut wood (p. 88).
4. Buy gloves for his mother (p. 92).
5. Woman at orphanage tells her (p. 93).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. He is undersized and will not do a good job of chopping wood.
- 1b. Begins to respect him and admire his integrity; enjoys his company.
- 2a. Jerry does considerate things for her without being asked; feels responsible for welfare of Pat; enjoys sitting by fire with narrator and dog as if he were with his family. Narrator gives him small gifts and offers him companionship.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

The word *integrity* is an important one to the narrator; it means "rigid adherence to a code or standard of values." A person thought of as having integrity is generally admired. Have students write a character sketch of someone they con-

sider to have integrity. They should give specific examples that illustrate this quality.

Students may enjoy watching the 1983 movie *Cross Creek*, which is available on videocassette. Have them write an essay in which they compare the character of the writer in the movie with the

narrator of "A Mother in Mannville."

Students, in reading more of Rawlings' work, could be referred to *The Yearling*, *When the Whippoorwill*, and *Cross Creek*.

2b. Does not realize that Jerry has transferred devotion he might have had for his mother.

3a. Responses will vary. Wants so much to have a mother that he has created one. 3b. Too self-centered to pick up clues that Jerry's fantasy is constructed out of relationship with her.

4. Values her independence; not prepared for strong emotional ties. She is drawn to the boy, but in end, although she feels guilty, easier for her to turn attention to own plans.

5. Examples include saying Jerry did what is "done only by the great of heart," suggesting she realizes her heart was not as great; recalling place on stoop where Jerry waited; feeling "almost relieved" Jerry was not around because it was easier not to say good-bye to him.

6a. Deserts Jerry, as she believes mother to have done, leaving him money for presents. 6b. Responses will vary; narrator may be too self-centered to respond to his feelings.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Integrity* means "whole" or "entire" honesty or sincerity.

2. *Integer*: a whole number.

*Integral*: essential to completeness.

*Integrate*: to form into whole.

3. Has same Latin root.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings moved to Florida, she intended to cut her ties with urban culture and focus full time on writing and the natural world. That area and its people provided the source for much of her best writing.

son relationship? b. How does the narrator fail to understand Jerry's feelings?

3. The narrator says that Jerry had integrity. Yet he tells a lie. a. What causes Jerry to lie about his mother? b. Why do you think the narrator does not suspect that Jerry is lying?

4. After deciding to see Jerry's mother, the narrator decides against it: "It was none of my concern." How would you describe the conflict within her?

5. Which of the narrator's words indicate that she feels guilty as she remembers her relationship with Jerry?

6. The narrator judges Jerry's mother harshly for living in Mannville, apart from her son, and sending him gifts. a. What is ironic about her own behavior at the end of the story? b. Do you find her reaction to Jerry sensitive or insensitive? Explain your answer.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Related Words

**Etymology** (ět'ə-mōl'ə-jē) is the study of the origin and development of words. The history of a word can often be found at the beginning of a dictionary entry. Etymologies often reveal how words are related in meaning.

The word *integrity* comes from a Latin word meaning "whole" or "entire." Can you see a connection between the current usage of the word and its etymological meaning?

Some other words in our language come from the same source as *integrity*. In a dictionary, check the etymologies of *integer*, *integral*, and *integrate*. How is each word related to *integrity*?

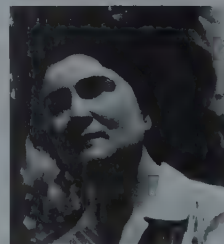
## Writing About Literature

### Analyzing Methods of Characterization

As you have learned, an author reveals what a character is like through methods of direct and indirect characterization (see page 67). Show how Rawlings presents and develops the character of Jerry, referring to specific details in the story.

## About the Author

### Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (1896–1953)



Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings was born in Washington, D.C. She attended the University of Wisconsin and worked as a journalist. In 1928 she bought an orange grove at Cross Creek in Florida and

settled there. The swamplands and back country of Florida became the setting for many of her stories. She won the Pulitzer prize in 1939 for *The Yearling*, a story of a boy and his pet fawn. Her other books include a collection of short stories, *When the Whippoorwill*, and a collection of remembrances, *Cross Creek*.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the actions, motives, and attitudes of the two main characters in "The Cask of Amontillado." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 102 will give students practice in analyzing word structure by determining the meaning of prefixes and suffixes.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Arrange ahead of time for a student to report on the catacombs, extensive tunnels and burial chambers that underlie much of Rome and other Mediterranean cities. Ask students to comment on the atmosphere of such a setting.

## POINT OF VIEW

# The Cask of Amontillado<sup>o</sup>

EDGAR ALLAN POE

*The person telling a story—the narrator—may be a character who observes or participates in the action. Note how Poe achieves dramatic irony in this story by having his narrator, Montresor, tell us directly what he sees, thinks, and feels. What differences are there between what Montresor perceives and what you, the reader, perceive?*

- 1 The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well
- 2 know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. At length I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea
- 3 of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.
- 4 It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to

smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.<sup>1</sup>

- He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be
- 5 respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit.<sup>2</sup> For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary<sup>3</sup> Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skillful in the

1. **immolation** (im'ə-lā'shən): sacrifice.

2. **virtuoso spirit**: deep interest in and knowledge of the arts.

3. **gemmary** (jēm'ə-rē'): knowledge of precious stones.

<sup>o</sup> **Amontillado** (ə-mən'tə-lā'dō): a variety of sherry.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote guides readers to Poe's use of a first-person narrator to achieve **dramatic irony**. Dramatic irony is created in two ways: Readers know what Montresor's intended victim does not know, and readers cannot share Montresor's perceptions.

## The Cask of Amontillado

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in presenting an analysis of the actions and motivations of the main characters.

1

**Exposition.** Readers learn in first words of story Montresor's motive for revenge: he has been insulted by Fortunato.

2

While story will reveal nature of Montresor's soul, reader does not yet know what he is like, in spite of this assertion.

3

**Characterization.** Montresor's character begins to emerge: he will get vengeance—without any chance of retaliation.

4

**Characterization.** Narrator is devious; acts as though he is still a friend of Fortunato.

5

Montresor knows Fortunato well; he will play on Fortunato's pride in being connoisseur of fine wines.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Montresor, the diabolical narrator of this tale of horror, pledges revenge upon Fortunato for an insult. He intends to seek vengeance, but he must have his victim know what is happening to him. What will Montresor's plan be? Will he suc-

**6** **Irony.** Fortunato's clown costume is appropriate, for Montresor plans to make a fool of him.

**7** **What is ironic about the handshaking?** Is happy to see Fortunato because he has planned to murder him. Yet continuous shaking of hands gives appearance of pleasure at meeting friend.

**8** Montresor plays on Fortunato's ego and baits him by saying he will go to someone else to determine if wine is really Amontillado.

**9** Fortunato, priding himself on being an expert at tasting wines, insults other wine taster, Luchesi.

**10** Montresor uses reverse psychology: acting as if you do not want someone to do something so that the person will want to do it.

**11** **Foreshadowing.** Disguising himself and insuring disappearance of servants portends evil he has in mind.

**12** **Setting.** Damp, dark burial place establishes sinister atmosphere.

ceed, or will he become a victim of his own horror?

## PRESENTATION

"The Cask of Amontillado" is carefully crafted so that every detail contributes to "a certain unique or single effect." (See discussion of Poe's theory of the short story on p. 83 of the *Teacher's Manual*.) It is also a classic example of the use of an

Italian vintages myself, and bought largely **10** whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season,<sup>4</sup> that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking **6** much. The man wore motley.<sup>5</sup> He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I **7** was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him: "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking today! But I have received a pipe<sup>6</sup> of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

**8** "As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If anyone has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me——"

**9** "Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from sherry."<sup>7</sup>

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

**4. carnival season:** the period of celebration before Lent, such as the Mardi Gras festival in New Orleans.

**5. motley:** the varicolored costume of a jester.

**6. pipe:** a large cask.

**7. sherry:** Fortunato is probably using "sherry" for the sweet variety of sherry. Amontillado is a dry variety.

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi——"

"I have no engagement——come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are incrustured with niter."<sup>8</sup>

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself **11** of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a roquelaure<sup>9</sup> closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.<sup>10</sup>

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux,<sup>11</sup> and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe?" said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white webwork which gleams from these cavern walls."

**8. niter** (nī'tər): white or gray salt deposit.

**9. roquelaure** (rōk'ə-lōr): a short cloak.

**10. palazzo** (pə-lăt'sō): a palace or very luxurious house.

**11. flambeaux** (flām'bōz'): lighted torches.

unreliable **narrator**, one whom the reader is expected to see through and not accept at face value. Montresor tells his tale of revenge smugly, almost matter-of-factly, inviting the reader to applaud his cleverness. Students should realize that Poe does not intend them to sympathize

with Montresor but, rather, to judge him. By telling the story from Montresor's point of view, Poe intensifies the effect of moral shock and horror, forcing the reader to share the inner workings of a murderer's mind.

Ninth-graders will likely need help with the

first paragraph. Defining words may not be adequate; paraphrasing may be needed, too. You might read aloud until students understand Montresor's clever exploitation of Fortunato's pride in being a wine connoisseur.

He turned toward me, and looked into my 17 eyes with two filmy **orbs** that **distilled** the rheum of intoxication.

"Niter?" he asked at length.

"Niter," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go 13 back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as 14 once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere 15 nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily; but you should use all proper caution. A draft of this Medoc will defend us<sup>+</sup> from the damp."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

16 "Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.<sup>1</sup>

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that **repose** around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."<sup>12</sup>

12. **arms**: coat of arms, an insignia with several figures and a family motto.

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant<sup>13</sup> whose fangs are embedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit*."<sup>14</sup>

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons<sup>15</sup> intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The niter!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough——" 18

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draft of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a **flagon** of De Grève. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a **gesticulation** I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

19 "You are not of the masons."<sup>16</sup>

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

13. **foot d'or . . . rampant**: The Montresor coat of arms shows a huge golden foot against a blue background, crushing a serpent that is rearing up.

14. **Nemo . . . lacessit**: Latin for "No one assails me with impunity." In other words: "No one can attack me without being punished."

15. **puncheons** (pūn'chənz): large casks for beer or wine.

16. **masons**: the Freemasons, a secret fraternal order; also, bricklayers.

13

**Irony.** Montresor, of course, does not value Fortunato's health.

14

**Is there any hint of Montresor's real motivation in this dialogue?** Montresor may be jealous of Fortunato—"You are happy, as I once was."

15

**Irony.** Fortunato will die, though not of a cough but by murder.

16

**Irony.** Montresor urges Fortunato to drink, increasing his intoxication; offers a toast to his "long life."

17

**Symbol.** Insignia is symbolic of Montresor's evil character and intent. He is like snake, intends revenge.

18

Montresor now speaks in different tone, drawing Fortunato's attention to dangers of catacombs. But Fortunato ignores warnings.

19

**Irony.** Montresor, although not a member of organization, contends that he is mason as he thinks of his plan to wall up victim.



20

Montresor produces trowel, tool he will use to wall up Fortunato.

21

Setting. Dank and bone-littered vaults add to horror of story.

22

Because Fortunato is intoxicated, he is easily overwhelmed and chained.

23

Irony. Clearly, Montresor means opposite of what he says. Fortunato is unable to return.

24

Fortunato is so drunk he still is thinking about tasting wine; not aware of what is happening.

25

Montresor has clearly premeditated murder; mortar and stones are carefully hidden behind pile of bones.

26

How can you tell that Montresor is deranged? As Fortunato furiously and uselessly tries to shake out of chains, Montresor sits down among bones to take pleasure in torturing his victim.

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

20 "It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my *roquelaure*.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, 21 forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an in-

stant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment 22 more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the niter. Indeed it is very damp. Once more let me implore you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

24 "The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was not the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the



Illustration from *Illustrated London News* (1935).

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

English newspapers first carried illustrations in the 1730s, woodcuts to accompany news stories, but it was not until 1842, when the *Illustrated London News* began, that England had a fully illustrated paper. The weekly had thirty-two woodcuts in its first edition of sixteen pages. The *Illustrated London News* reported the news of the day and later, to increase circulation, ran fiction. Competing weeklies came and went, but the *News* continued to publish through the years.

### About the Artwork

This watercolor is done with strong brushstrokes and mostly muted colors. The dark shadows, blurred, dusty skulls, whitish tone on walls that suggests niter-covered surfaces, and dark swirling cape of Montresor form a framework around the more distinctly drawn horror-stricken face of Fortunato. The viewer's eyes are naturally drawn through the light-colored strokes to the yellow, which is the only spot of bright color, to the face in the light. The rest of the watercolor remains mysterious, well suited to the story.

27

**Characterization.** Montresor has taken every precaution to make sure Fortunato will not be a threat to him. Though a murderer, he is basically cowardly.

28

Montresor mimics Fortunato's yells of fear and anguish, no doubt intensifying Fortunato's sense of helplessness.

29

**Irony.** Fortunato correctly interprets Montresor's repetition of "let us be gone" to mean that he is about to die.

30

**Characterization.** Montresor denies any feeling of remorse as he explains his "heart sickness" as being result of dampness in catacombs.

# READING CHECK

1. Pride in knowledge of wines (p. 95).
2. Have gone to carnival (p. 96).
3. To vaults below palace (p. 96).
4. Shows a trowel (p. 98).
5. Taken by surprise and too drunk to realize what is happening (p. 98).

sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the masonwork, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier,<sup>17</sup> I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who **clamored**. I reechoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamor grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo—the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

29 "Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud:

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again:

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining **aperture** and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I reerected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat!*<sup>18</sup>

18. *In . . . requiescat!*: Latin for "May he rest in peace!"

## Reading Check

1. According to Montresor, what is Fortunato's weak point?
2. Why are there no attendants at the narrator's palazzo?
3. Where does Montresor lead Fortunato?
4. What does Montresor produce to indicate ironically that he is a member of the Freemasons?
5. Why is Fortunato unable to resist when Montresor chains him to the granite wall?

17. **rapier** (rā'pē-ər): a long two-edged sword.



## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. In the opening paragraph Montresor speaks of carrying out his revenge with “impunity”—with freedom from risk or punishment. Give a step-by-step account of his plan.

2. The story takes place during the carnival season. During such a season there are many parties and costume balls. People often appear in the streets in costume, as Fortunato does. Why is it appropriate for Fortunato to wear a jester’s costume?

3. Montresor speaks of bearing the “thousand injuries of Fortunato.” a. From what you learn of Fortunato through his words and actions, do you think he has deliberately injured Montresor? Explain. (For example, if he had, he would be cautious in his dealings with Montresor. Is he?) b. What does the mention of the “thousand injuries” tell you about Montresor?

4a. Montresor ironically gives Fortunato hints of his intentions. Find examples. b. How does Fortunato react to these hints?

5. The last part of the story, after Montresor has chained Fortunato to the granite wall, is told in considerable detail to arouse the reader’s horror. a. Point out some of the details. b. How does Montresor’s matter-of-fact account of these details heighten the effect of horror?

6. **Dramatic irony** results when the reader knows something that a character does not know. Montresor is proud of his revenge and considers it an act of justice. Do you think the author meant you to share Montresor’s attitude? Give details in the story to support your answer.

## Literary Elements

### Point of View

**Point of View** is the angle or position from which a story is told. Just as a movie camera remains at a distance to take in a large scene or moves in to concentrate on one face, so the point of view in a story determines the distance between readers and characters. A story can be told by an outside observer, by a single character, or by several characters within a story.

Edgar Allan Poe chose to tell “The Cask of Amontillado” from the inside, through the words of its principal character. This point of view, in which the narrator speaks in his own person as “I,” is called the **first-person point of view**. Poe never steps outside of his narrator to tell you what he, the author, thinks about the characters or actions. Yet he does leave clues to indicate how his readers should regard Montresor. You probably concluded that Montresor is not a reliable narrator and that you should not take his word for the “thousand injuries” he had endured or for the justice of his revenge.

1. Why do you think Poe decided to limit the point of view so that you see the events through Montresor’s eyes and mind? To answer this question, imagine that “The Cask of Amontillado” had been told by an outside observer, as in a police report or in a newspaper story. Would the story be as horrible or as shocking? Explain.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Lures Fortunato to palace; wears mask at carnival; makes sure servants will be gone; leads Fortunato to remote vault and sends him to little niche where he chains him to wall; boxes Fortunato in with new wall.

2. Montresor is making a fool of him; last jingle of bells contrasts with his dire fate.

3a. Fortunato is eager and friendly; does not interpret Montresor’s warnings; walks unsuspectingly into niche—not actions of a man who knows he has wronged someone. 3b. Montresor holds grudges and exaggerates terribly; seems paranoid, insane, even during his quiet plotting.

4a. Agrees when Fortunato says, “I shall not die of a cough”; drinks to “long life” of Fortunato; quotes his family motto, a threat of quick revenge for wrongs; lets Fortunato see trowel he has brought with him. 4b. Shows no suspicions; he is intoxicated and naively trusts Montresor.

5a. Depth of crypt, foulness of air, human remains, darkness, chains, dampness, gradual walling up of niche, Fortunato’s moans and screams. 5b. Readers are chilled by his cold-blooded account.

6. Responses will vary. We are repelled by Montresor’s hatred, lack of motive, pretense of friendship, etc., and cannot share his attitude.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Montresor’s obsessive hatred, paranoia, and precise plotting are best revealed in his voice.

2. Third-person point of view would distance reader from Montresor, diminishing shock and horror.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

### Prefixes

1. **Resolve:** to make a firm decision about;  
**redress:** to set right;  
**recess:** niche, or hollow place in a surface or wall;  
**recoil:** to fall back, return;  
**resist:** to strive or work against;  
**resume:** to begin or take up again after interruption;  
**reassure:** to restore confidence to.
2. **Surmount:** to overcome, conquer;  
**surpass:** to be or go beyond, exceed.
3. **Support:** below;  
**subside:** down;  
**suppose:** under.

### Suffixes

1. **Utterance:** the act of uttering or expressing vocally.
2. **Definiteness:** the state of being certain.
3. **Connoisseurship:** ability or skill in having acute discrimination.
4. **Excessive:** the state of exceeding what is normal or sufficient.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

You may wish to have the class discuss the character of Montresor before they attempt this assignment. Whatever their opinions of Montresor, students will have to examine his cold intelligence and the great pleasure he takes in his crime to get a complete picture of the way his mind works. Students may wish to debate whether the narrator is simply insane or intrinsically evil.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Analyzing Word Structure

In the opening paragraph of the story, the narrator says, "I must not only *punish*, but punish with *impunity*." Both italicized words have the same ancestor, the word *poena* meaning "penalty or punishment." The syllable *im-* has the meaning "not" or "without." *Impunity* means "without penalty or punishment." Montresor intends to punish Fortunato and to get away without any harm to himself.

Many words in our language are composed of separate word elements. A **prefix** is a syllable joined to the beginning of a word or a word base to create a new word. The prefix *pre-* means "before." When it is joined to the word *school*, we get a new word, *preschool*, which literally means "before school," or that period of a child's life before school age.

A **suffix** is a syllable added at the end of a word or word base to form a new word. The suffix *-able* means "capable of, having qualities of, or tending to." The word *readable* literally means "capable of being read." In actual usage, it means "easy to read" or "legible."

The following exercise deals with several useful prefixes, and suffixes.

### Prefixes

- 1 The prefix *re-* means "back" or "again." Determine the meanings of these words: *resolve*, *redress*, *recess*, *recoil*, *resist*, *resume*, *reassure*. Check your answers in a dictionary.

- The prefix *sur-* means "over, above, beyond." Determine the meaning of *surmount* and *surpass*.

- The prefix *sub-*, sometimes spelled *suc-*, *suf-*, *sug-*, *sum-*, *sup-*, *sur-*, or *sus-*, means "under, beneath, below, or lower in rank." Look up these words in a dictionary, and determine what the prefix means in each one: *support*, *subside*, *suppose*.

### Suffixes

- The suffix *-ance* means "the act of" or "the state of being." What is the meaning of *utterance*?

- The suffix *-ness* means "condition, quality, or state of being." What is the meaning of *definiteness*?

- The suffix *-ship* means "condition, quality, state of being" or "ability or skill in." What is the meaning of *connoisseurship*?

- The suffix *-ive* means "of, relating to, belonging to, having the nature of, having the quality of," or "tending to, given to." What is the meaning of *excessive*?

## Writing About Literature

### Analyzing the Narrator

"The Cask of Amontillado" is generally considered to be one of Poe's masterpieces because of the skill with which he handles the elements of horror and irony. Montresor's bizarre act of revenge is without doubt the act of an insane person, yet his plan and its execution are clever, and his comments reveal a kind of diabolic humor. Write an essay in which you give your impression of Montresor. Although his crime is appalling, how does Poe create an interest in the way his mind works?

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to contrast the two characters in Poe's "A Cask of Amontillado" and comment on the effects of Poe's use of a first-person point of view to tell the story.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Some of the vivid images in Poe's story are of Fortunato's costume, the catacombs, Fortunato chained to the wall, and Montresor at work with his trowel. Students may want to draw or paint some scenes from the story for a class display.

You might bring a collection of Poe's stories for students who want to read more of his work. Suggested stories include "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."

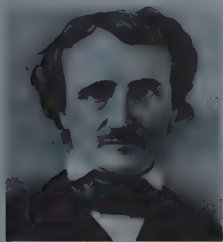
## Creative Writing

### ► Writing a Radio Play

"The Cask of Amontillado" has several times been adapted and performed as a radio play. Make your own adaptation for the medium of radio, providing narration, dialogue, and sound effects. Remember that a radio play appeals to the imagination through the mind's eye. Sound effects and pauses can be as effective as words in stirring your listeners' emotions. You may present your play already taped or perform it "live," making use of a narrator and a sound-effects technician.

## About the Author

### Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849)



The son of actors, Edgar Allan Poe was orphaned at the age of two. He was taken in by a childless couple, Mr. and Mrs. John Allan of Richmond, Virginia. The Allans gave Poe a gentle-

man's education but never formally adopted him. Poe entered the University of Virginia and soon ran up large debts, which the Allans refused to pay. Poe left the University before his first academic year ended. Under an assumed name, he enlisted in the army and rose to the rank of sergeant major. After two years he entered West Point, but chafing under the restraints of military discipline, he deliberately provoked a court-martial and was expelled from the Academy. Thereafter, the Allans would no longer help him.

The rest of Poe's life was a struggle to support himself through writing and editing. His

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on page 209.

marriage to Virginia Clemm, his thirteen-year-old cousin, added to his financial burdens. She died of tuberculosis when she was twenty-five. Poe worked as an editor on several magazines, but the work was taxing and the pay small. Near the end of his life, he managed to gain control of a magazine, but it failed for lack of sufficient funds.

Today Poe is equally famous for his short stories and his poetry. Among his best-known poems are "The Raven," "Ulalume," "Annabel Lee," and "The Bells." Among his most famous short stories are "The Black Cat," "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Pit and the Pendulum," and "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Poe believed that a short story should be planned and written so that every word, every detail contributes toward a single, powerful impression.

## CREATIVE WRITING

If your students work well in small groups, you might organize several simultaneous dramatization projects for radio so that every student can take part in writing, directing, acting, or managing sound effects. Remind students that instead of stage directions for movements and gestures, they must provide radio directions for sound effects. Other stories that could be adapted for radio presentation are "The Most Dangerous Game" and "The Lady, or the Tiger?"

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

See p. 83 in the *Teacher's Manual* for more detail on Poe's theory of the short story.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the main character's attitudes toward events, other characters, and herself in "My Delicate Heart Condition." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 110 will give students practice in recognizing the characteristics of the narrator's colorful speech.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Begin by talking about scary stories and memorable storytelling sessions to get your students ready for Harriet's narration. Ask volunteers to relate some of the scariest stories they can remember.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the narrator's manner of speaking. You may want to discuss the concept of first-person narration. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this point of view? As students read, have them consider the reliability of the narrator by examining the description of people and events in the story.

## My Delicate Heart Condition

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of the main character's attitudes.

# My Delicate Heart Condition

**TONI CADE BAMBARA**

*The narrator of this story has an individual way of speaking and of describing other people. What impression do you form of her character? Do you consider her a reliable observer?*

1

**Point of view.** First-person narrator tells story in conversational style—lively and friendly, with youthful exaggeration and dramatic flair.

2

Calling other children "crybabies" suggests narrator thinks of herself as braver, now grown up.

3

Narrator moves from one subject to another, as might be done in conversation.

4

**What has the narrator revealed about herself at this point in the story?** Name is Harriet; loves excitement and excels in scaring other children with imaginative stories.

1 My cousin Joanne has not been allowed to hang out with me for some time because she went and told Aunt Hazel that I scare her to death whenever she sleeps over at our house or I spend the weekend at hers. The truth is I sometimes like to tell stories about blood-thirsty vampires or ugly monsters that lurk in clothes closets or giant beetles that eat their way through the shower curtain, like I used to do at camp to entertain the kids in my bunk. But Joanne always cries and that makes the stories even weirder, like background music her crying. And too—I'm not going to lie about it—I get spookier on purpose until all the little crybabies are stuffing themselves under their pillows and throwing their sneakers at me and making such a racket that Mary the counselor has to come in and shine her flashlight around the bunkhouse. I play like I'm asleep. The rest of them are too busy blubbing and finding their way out from under the blankets to tell Mary that it's me. Besides, once they get a load

of her standing against the moonlight in that long white robe of hers looking like a ghost, they just start up again and pretty soon the whole camp is awake. Anyway, that's what I do for fun. So Joanne hasn't been around. And this year I'll have to go to the circus by myself and to camp without her. My mother said on the phone to Aunt Hazel—"Good, keep Jo over there and maybe Harriet'll behave herself if she's got no one to show off to." For all the years my mother's known me, she still doesn't understand that my behaving has got nothing to do with who I hang out with. A private thing between me and me or maybe between me and the Fly family since they were the ones that first got me to sit through monster movies and withstand all the terror I could take.

For four summers now, me and the Fly family have had this thing going. A battle of nerves, you might say. Each year they raise the rope closer and closer to the very top of the tent—I hear they're going to perform out-

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 10 / Selection Test 10 / Reading Check 10 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 10.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

A lively, sensitive young girl named Harriet Watkins, who lives in Jamaica, Long Island, relates how she loves telling scary stories to frighten other children her age, and how she is not at all afraid when watching the death-defying Fly fam-

ily—a troupe of circus acrobats. Nothing scares little Harriet; nothing bothers her. Or does it?

## PRESENTATION

Tell students that they should decide whether the narrator is a realistic character, keeping in mind her age. Ask them whether, at that age, they shared Harriet's interest in frightening stories, stunts, and movies.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Balloons delight children at fairs, zoos, theme parks, circuses, and other festive occasions. These colorful balloons have their origins in the work of two French brothers, Joseph and Etienne Montgolfier, who stumbled upon the idea that, since hot air rises, a bag containing hot air would itself rise. This led directly to their invention of the hot-air balloon. By the early eighteenth century, hot air was generally abandoned in favor, first, of hydrogen, and later, helium. Balloons used decoratively are made of latex, plastic, or polyester and are often filled with helium instead of air.

doors this year and be even higher—and they stretch the rope further across the rings where the clowns and the pony riders perform. Each year they get bolder and more daring with their rope dancing and the swinging by the legs and flinging themselves into empty space making everyone throw up their hands and  
5 gasp for air until Mr. Fly at the very last possible second swings out on his bar to catch them up by the tips of their heels. Everyone just dies  
6 and clutches at their hearts. Everybody but me. I sit there calmly. I've trained myself. Joanne used to die and duck her head under the benches and stay there till it was all over.

Last summer they really got bold. On the final performance just before the fair closed,

and some revival-type tent show comes in and all the kids go off to camp, the Fly family performed without a net. I figured they'd be up to  
7 something so I made sure my stomach was like steel. I did ten push-ups before breakfast,  
8 twenty sit-ups before lunch, skipped dinner altogether. My brother Teddy kidded me all day—"Harriet's trying out for the Olympics." I passed up the ice man on the corner and the pizza and sausage stand by the schoolyard and the cotton candy and jelly-apple lady and the pickle and penny-candy boy, in fact I passed up all the stands that lead from the street down the little roadway to the fair grounds that used to be a swamp when we first moved from Baltimore to Jamaica, Long Island. It wasn't easy,

5

Acrobats who seem to "fly" through air are appropriately named.

6

**Characterization.** Harriet has intense pride in fact that she alone can withstand anxiety from watching Fly family.

7

**Simile.** With a "stomach like steel," Harriet will not suffer from queasiness, or "butterflies," as she watches Fly family.

8

Use to answer study question 2a, p. 110.

Concentrate your presentation of this story on the character of the narrator, a spunky and thoughtful young girl whose actions and attitudes should prompt lively discussion. Use the **For Study and Discussion** questions to explore her interests and the change in her behavior.

Then invite students to find examples of Harriet's sensitivity and consideration for others. Point out the ways in which Bambara presents Harriet's character—through what Harriet says about herself, how she says what she says, her actions, and the opinions of others in the story—and

have students find examples of these methods. Ask students to explain whether or not they consider Harriet likable and reliable.

9

**Characterization.** Harriet proves herself determined, with strength to resist treats in interest of winning contest of wills with Fly family.

10

If Harriet succumbs to nausea, Fly family has won the battle.

11

**Why does Harriet say she "almost" enjoys the circus acts?** Has seen such acts in past years and is no longer thrilled by them; she is waiting for feature attraction, the Fly family.

12

Harriet is not easily impressed; she is anxious to test her nerves while watching the Fly family.

13

Spelling and capitalization imitate speech of circus announcer.

14

**Description.** Details of Fly family's appearance contrasts with skill. Father's "King Kong" arms suggest clumsiness. Images of chair, ping pong ball belie mother's acrobatic skill. Sons' faces are blank.

15

Harriet admits that new performance, in spite of her preparations, was almost too much to endure.

I'm not going to lie, but I was taking no chances. Between the balloon man and the wheel of fortune was the usual clump of ladies from church who came night after night to try to win the giant punch bowl set on the top shelf above the wheel, but had to settle night after night for a jar of gumdrops or salt-and-pepper shakers or some other little thing from the bottom shelf. And from the wheel of fortune to the tent was at least a million stands selling B.B. bats and jawbreakers and gingerbread and sweet potato pie and frozen custard and—like I said it wasn't easy. A million ways to tempt you, to unsettle your stomach, and make you lose the battle to the Fly family.

I sat there almost enjoying the silly clowns who came tumbling out of a steamer trunk no bigger than the one we have in the basement where my mother keeps my old report cards and photographs and letters and things. And I almost enjoyed the fire-eater and the knife-thrower, but I was so close up I could see how there wasn't any real thrill. I almost enjoyed the fat-leg girls who rode the ponies two at a time and standing up, but their costumes weren't very pretty—just an ordinary polo shirt like you get if you run in the PAL meets and short skirts you can wear on either side like the big girls wear at the roller rink. And I almost enjoyed the jugglers except that my Uncle Bubba can juggle the dinner plates better any day of the week so long as Aunt Hazel isn't there to stop him. I was impatient and started yawning. Finally all the clowns hitched up their baggy pants and tumbled over each other out of the ring and into the dark, the jugglers caught all the things that were up in the air and yawning just like me went off to the side. The pony girls brought their horses to a sudden stop that raised a lot of dust, then jumped down into the dirt and bowed. Then the ringmaster stepped into the circle of light and tipped his hat which was a little raggedy

from where I was sitting and said—"And now, Ladieez and Gentlemen, what you've all been waiting forrr, the Main aTTRACtion, the FLY FAMILIEEE." And everyone jumped up to shout like crazy as they came running out on their toes to stand in the light and then climb the ropes. I took a deep breath and folded my arms over my chest and a kid next to me went into hiding, acting like she was going to tie her shoelaces.

There used to be four of them—the father, a big guy with a bald head and bushy mustache and shoulders and arms like King Kong; a tall lanky mother whom you'd never guess could even climb into a high chair or catch anything heavier than a Ping-Pong ball to look at her; the oldest son who looked like his father except he had hair on his head but none on his face and a big face it was, so that no matter how high up he got you could always tell whether he was smiling or frowning or counting; the younger boy about thirteen, maybe, had a vacant stare like he was a million miles away feeding his turtles or something, anything but walking along a tightrope or flying through the air with his family. I had always liked to watch him because he was as cool as I was. But last summer the little girl got into the act. My grandmother says she's probably a midget cause no self-respecting mother would allow her child to be up there acting like a bird. "Just a baby," she'd say, "Can't be more than six years old. Should be home in bed. Must be a midget." My grandfather would give me a look when she started in and we'd smile at her together.

They almost got to me that last performance, dodging around with new routines and two at a time so that you didn't know which one Mr. Fly was going to save at the last minute. But he'd fly out and catch the little boy and swing over to the opposite stand where the big boy was flying out to catch them both by the



wrists and the poor woman would be left kind of dangling there, suspended, then she'd do this double flip which would kill off everyone in the tent except me, of course, and swing out on the very bar she was on in the first place. And then they'd mess around two or three flying at once just to confuse you until the big drum roll started and out steps the little girl in a party dress and huge blindfold wrapped around her little head and a pink umbrella like they sell down in Chinatown. And I almost—I won't lie about it—I almost let my heart thump me off the bench. I almost thought I too had to

**16** tie my shoelaces. But I sat there. Stubborn. And the kid starts bouncing up and down on the rope like she was about to take off and tear through the canvas roof. Then out swings her little brother and before you know it, Fly Jr.

**17** like a great eagle with his arms flapping grabs up the kid, her eyeband in his teeth and swoops her off to the bar that's already got Mrs. Mr. and Big Bro on it and surely there's no room for him. And everyone's standing on their feet clutching at their faces. Everyone but **18** me. Cause I know from the getgo that Mr. and Mrs. are going to leave the bar to give Jr. room and fly over to the other side. Which is exactly what they do. The lady in front of me, Mrs. Perez, who does all the sewing in our neighborhood, gets up and starts shaking her hands like **19** ladies do to get the fingernail polish dry and she says to me with her eyes jammed shut "I must go finish the wedding gowns. Tell me later who died." And she scoots through the aisle, falling all over everybody with her eyes still shut and never looks up. And Mrs. Caine

**16**

*What does Harriet mean by "I almost thought I too had to tie my shoelaces"? She finds performance scary. Pretending to tie shoelaces would give her excuse to look away.*

**17**

*Simile. Comparing movements of Fly Jr. to those of eagle suggests boy's grace, strength, elegance.*

**18**

*"From the getgo": slang expression originating in Black dialect, meaning "from the very beginning."*

**19**

*Imagery. Visual images create humorous effect: "shaking her hands," "eyes jammed shut," "scoots," and "falling all over everybody."*

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The modern circus originated in England during the eighteenth century. It consisted primarily of trick riding on horses, in a ring forty-two feet in diameter—a standard size to this day. In the nineteenth century, horsemanship began to be upstaged by wild animal tamers, jugglers, and acrobats. With the invention of the flying trapeze in 1859, acrobats took to the air and have become among the most inspiring of all circus acts.



20

**Irony.** "Their very worst" means "their very best" in terms of skill and bravado.

21

Harriet leaves story of circus to pick up on latest adventure at camp.

22

**Characterization.** Harriet reveals her sensitivity to new boy, even at expense of her favorite pastime.

23

Failure to see difference in "rheumatic" and "romantic" heart is humorous on literal level. Considering, however, that both types of heart are easily "broken," statement becomes poignant.

24

Harriet exaggerates situation to emphasize her threat; here **waste** means "kill."

25

**Characterization.** Incident shows Harriet to be openly honest, if somewhat naive to think that George would be upset at losing her adoration.

26

Harriet immediately recognizes George's pretended compliment as mockery of Willie.

27

**What does Harriet's defense of Willie show about her character?** Has strong sense of justice and fair play; is courageous enough to fight for her principles.

taps me on the back and leans over and says, "Some people just can't take it." And I smile at her and at her twins who're sitting there with their mouths open. I fold my arms over my chest and just dare the Fly family to do their very worst.

- 21 The minute I got to camp, I ran up to the main house where all the counselors gather to say hello to the parents and talk with the directors. I had to tell Mary the latest doings with the Fly family. But she put a finger to her mouth like she sometimes does to shush me. "Let's not have any scary stuff this summer, Harriet," she said, looking over my shoulder at a new kid. This new kid, Willie, was from my old neighborhood in Baltimore so we got friendly right off. Then he told me that he had a romantic heart so I quite naturally took him under my wing and decided not to give him a heart attack with any ghost tales. Mary said he meant "rheumatic" heart,<sup>1</sup> but I don't see any difference. So I told Mary to move him out of George's tent and give him a nicer counselor who'd respect his romantic heart. George used to be my play boyfriend when I first came to camp as a little kid and didn't know any better. But he's not a nice person. He makes up funny nicknames for people which aren't funny at all. Like calling Eddie Michaels the Watermelon Kid or David Farmer Charcoal Plenty which I really do not appreciate and especially from a counselor. And once he asked Joanne, who was the table monitor, to go fetch a pail of milk from the kitchen. And the minute she got up, he started hatching a plot, trying to get the kids to hide her peanut butter sandwich and put spiders in her soup. I had to remind everyone at the table that Joanne was my first cousin by blood, and I would be forced to waste the first

bum that laid a hand on her plate. And ole George says, "Oh don't be a dumbhead, Harriet. Jo's so stupid she won't even notice."

- 25 And I told him right then and there that I was not his play girlfriend anymore and would rather marry the wolfman than grow up and be his wife. And just in case he didn't get the message, that night around campfire when we were all playing Little Sally Walker sittin' in a saucer and it was my turn to shake it to the east and to shake it to the west and to shake it to the very one that I loved the best—I shook straight for Mr. Nelson the lifeguard, who was not only the ugliest person in camp but the arch enemy of ole George.

And that very first day of camp last summer when Willie came running up to me to get in line for lunch, here comes George talking some simple stuff about "What a beautiful head you have, Willie. A long, smooth, streamlined head. A sure sign of superior gifts. Definitely genius proportions." And poor Willie went for it, grinning and carrying on and touching his head, which if you want to know the truth is a bullet head and that's all there is to it. And he's turning to me every which way, like he's modeling his head in a fashion show. And the minute his back is turned, ole George makes a face about Willie's head and all the kids in the line bust out laughing. So I had to beat up a few right then and there and finish off the rest later in the shower for being so stupid, laughing at a kid with a romantic heart.

One night in the last week of August when the big campfire party is held, it was very dark and the moon was all smoky, and I just couldn't help myself and started in with a story about the great caterpillar who was going to prowl through the tents and nibble off everybody's toes. And Willie started this whimpering in the back of his throat so I had to switch the story real quick to something cheerful. But before I

1. **rheumatic** (rōō-māt'ik): **heart:** caused by rheumatic fever in childhood, which often damages the valves of the heart.

28 could do that, ole George picked up my story and added a wicked witch who put spells on city kids who come to camp, and a hunchback dwarf that chopped up tents and bunk beds, 29 and a one-eyed phantom giant who gobbled up the hearts of underprivileged kids. And every time he got to the part where the phantom ripped out a heart, poor Willie would get louder and louder until finally he started rolling around in the grass and screaming and all the kids went crazy and scattered behind the rocks almost kicking the fire completely out as they dashed off into the darkness yelling bloody murder. And the counselors could hardly round us all up—me, too, I'm not going to lie about it. Their little circles of flashlight bobbing in and out of the bushes along the patches of pine, bumping into each other as they scrambled for us kids. And poor Willie rolling around something awful, so they took him to the infirmary.

I was sneaking some gingersnaps in to him later that night when I heard Mary and another senior counselor fussing at ole George in the hallway.

"You've been picking on that kid ever since he got here, George. But tonight was the limit——"

"I wasn't picking on him, I was just trying to tell a story——"

"All that talk about hearts, goblin' up hearts, and underpriv——"

"Yeh, you were directing it all at the little kid. You should be——"

"I wasn't talking about him. They're all underprivileged kids, after all. I mean all the kids are underprivileged."

I huddled back into the shadows and almost banged into Willie's iron bed. I was hoping he'd open his eyes and wink at me and tell me he was just fooling. That it wasn't so bad to

30 have an underprivileged heart. But he just

slept. "I'm an underprivileged kid too," I thought to myself. I knew it was a special camp, but I'd never realized. No wonder Aunt Hazel screamed so about my scary stories and my mother flicked off the TV when the monsters came on and Mary was always shushing me. We all had bad hearts. I crawled into the supply cabinet to wait for Willie to wake up so I could ask him about it all. I ate all the gingersnaps but I didn't feel any better. You have a romantic heart, I whispered to myself settling down among the bandages. You will have to be very careful.

It didn't make any difference to Aunt Hazel that I had changed, that I no longer told scary stories or dragged my schoolmates to the latest creature movie, or raced my friends to the edge of the roof, or held my breath, or ran under the train rail when the train was already in sight. As far as she was concerned, I was still the same ole spooky kid I'd always been. So Joanne was kept at home. My mother noticed the difference, but she said over the phone to my grandmother, "She's acting very ladylike these days, growing up." I didn't tell her about my secret, that I knew about my heart. And I was kind of glad Joanne wasn't around 'cause I would have blabbed it all to her and scared her to death. When school starts again, I decided, 34 I'll ask my teacher how to outgrow my underprivileged heart. I'll train myself, just like I did with the Fly family.

"Well, I guess you'll want some change to go to the fair again, hunh?" my mother said coming into my room dumping things in her pocketbook.

"No," I said. "I'm too grown up for circuses."

She put the money on the dresser anyway. I was lying, of course. I was thinking what a terrible strain it would be for Mrs. Perez and everybody else if while sitting there, with the

28 Harriet tries to change story to a cheerful one, but George's continuation of story is vicious and terrifying.

29 **Foreshadowing.** George's tale foreshadows damage done to Harriet's heart. Sets stage for Harriet to misunderstand counselors' conversation.

30 Harriet connects "underprivileged" with "romantic" heart condition.

31 Realizing that all the children are underprivileged, she now believes they all have "delicate hearts."

32 **Irony.** Harriet mistakenly believes she has a heart condition. Ironically, she does have a romantic (loving) heart. She will have to be careful because her heart is tender. She could be easily hurt.

33 **Why doesn't Harriet tell anyone about her heart? What does this suggest about her?** Doesn't want to upset or hurt others. She has kind heart.

34 **Characterization.** Harriet's plan to overcome her condition suggests she retains some of her drive, determination, courage.



**Is Harriet defeated at the end of the story?** Answers will vary. Some students may feel she has lost faith in herself; others may feel she has accepted her sensitivity.

### READING CHECK

1. Harriet frightens Joanne (p. 104).
2. Circus acrobats (p. 105).
3. Willie (p. 108).
4. Becomes so frightened that he has an attack (p. 109).
5. Thinks she is growing up and becoming more ladylike (p. 109).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Her stories; racing to edge of roof and running under rail when train was in sight.
- 2a. Doing push-ups, sit-ups, skipping dinner, and passing up treats. 2b. Stubbornly sits looking unmoved at routines.
- 3a. A romantic heart might be easily broken; a rheumatic heart might be easily damaged. 3b. Is considerate of his condition, fights to defend him.
- 4a. Says he is not a nice person, is no longer her play boyfriend.
- 4b. Insensitive, unthinking, and immature.
- 5a. Associates "underprivileged" with "romantic," and concludes that all underprivileged kids have heart problems.
- 5b. Overhears George saying all the kids are underprivileged.
6. Humorous because of Harriet's misunderstanding of words; sad because Harriet's concerns are sincere. Also suggests attitudes, emotions, and conditions that underprivileged children must cope with.
- 7a. Motives for her own behavior; perception of George's character; Willie's need for protection. 7b. Willie's heart condition; "underprivileged" status.
8. Develop perceptions based on what adults say; take information literally.

### CLOSURE

Ask students to give examples from the story that show the narrator's attitudes toward the other characters and toward herself.

Fly family zooming around in the open air a million miles above the ground, little Harriet Watkins should drop dead with a fatal heart attack behind them.

- 35 "I lost," I said out loud.  
"Lost what?"

"The battle with the Fly family."

She just stood there a long time looking at me, trying to figure me out, the way mothers are always doing but should know better. Then she kissed me goodbye and left for work.

### Reading Check

1. Why have Harriet and her cousin Joanne been kept apart?
2. Who are the members of the Fly family?
3. Who is the new camper Harriet befriends?
4. Why is Willie taken to the infirmary?
5. How does Harriet's mother interpret the change in her behavior?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The narrator, Harriet Watkins, tells us that she has a reputation for being a "spooky kid" who tells scary stories and who likes to take risks. What evidence is there that her reputation is well deserved?
2. According to Harriet, she has learned to master her fear in a "battle of nerves" with the Fly family. a. Before leaving for camp, how does she prepare herself for the final performance of the Fly family? b. How does she react to their new routines?
3. When Harriet arrives at summer camp, she

finds a new camper, Willie, who tells her that he has a "romantic" heart. a. Why is it significant that Harriet does not see any difference between the words *romantic* and *rheumatic*? b. How does Harriet take Willie "under her wing"?

4a. How do you know that Harriet dislikes George? b. What impression do you form of him from his treatment of Willie and from his stories about a "phantom giant who gobbled up the hearts of underprivileged kids"?

5a. When Harriet overhears George talking about "underprivileged kids," what conclusion does she draw? b. Why does she now believe that she, too, has a "bad heart"?

6. Toward the end of the story, Harriet says she will ask her teacher "how to outgrow my underprivileged heart." In what way is this statement both humorous and sad?

7. The reader of a story often grasps many things that the narrator is unaware of. This is particularly true when the narrator is a child, like Harriet. a. Which of Harriet's perceptions seem to be accurate? b. What does she fail to understand?

8. What insight does this story give into the way children develop perceptions about themselves?

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Recognizing Characteristics of Speech

In literature characters are defined not only by *what* they say but by *how* they say it. Harriet's individual manner of speaking is characterized by slang, vivid comparisons, and exaggeration.

Harriet says she is not allowed to "hang out" with her cousin Joanne. The phrase "hang out" is slang for "spend time." Harriet also uses

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Harriet's colorful speech invites oral readings. Have students choose their favorite scenes and prepare interpretive readings for the class.

Some students may enjoy reading about the adventures of another spunky girl who is sensi-

tive to adult comments—Anne Shirley, the heroine of L. M. Montgomery's novel *Anne of Green Gables*.

The **About the Author** section on this page tells how this author incorporated Bambara into her name. She took the name from a signature

she found in a sketchbook in a trunk belonging to her great-grandmother. Have students think about names they might choose as pen names if they were starting writing careers. Ask them to write paragraphs explaining their choices.

“cool” and “can’t take it” in their slang meanings. What do these words mean?

Harriet uses both vivid comparisons and exaggeration when she says that the father of the Fly family has arms “like King Kong,” and when she describes “Fly Jr. like a great eagle with his arms flapping.” She tells George that she would rather marry “the wolfman” than grow up and be married to him.

2 What other examples can you find of Harriet’s colorful speech?

## Descriptive Writing

### Describing a Scene

One important scene in this story takes place at a circus held at the fair grounds in Harriet’s neighborhood. Harriet gives us a sense of the activity and excitement of the circus by describing the food stands, the different acts, the costumes of the performers, and the thrilling feats of the trapeze artists.

Give your own impression of a day spent at a circus or a fair, re-creating the sights, sounds, and smells through precise details. For assistance in writing your paper, see pages 209-210.

## About the Author

Toni Cade Bambara (1939– )



Toni Cade Bambara (bām-bā’rā) grew up in New York City and Jersey City. She began writing when she was still a child. She took the name Bambara from a signature she

found in a sketchbook in a trunk belonging to her great-grandmother. Her books include *Gorilla, My Love*; *Tales and Short Stories for Black Folks*; *The Black Woman*; *The Salt Eaters*; and *The Sea Birds Are Still Alive*.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Cool* means “composed and calm.” *Can’t take it* means “can’t cope with it” (the “it” here is watching the acrobats).

2. Examples include “get a load of her,” description of acrobatic mother, comment that “I almost let my heart thump me off the bench,” image of Willie as “a bullet head,” and description of counselors’ flashlights.

## DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

The circus description is an effective writing model for students because it uses language similar to the everyday conversation of many ninth-graders and brings to life a scene familiar to most of them. Preliminary discussion should help each student decide on a dominant impression to convey and details to use in the development of his or her composition.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Toni Cade Bambara studied in New York City, in various places in the South, in Paris, and in Florence, Italy. In addition to her writing career, she has worked as a social worker, a therapist, a recreation director, a film writer and producer, and an English professor. In the 1960s and 1970s, Bambara became active in civil-rights issues. She has lectured extensively and has been involved in many neighborhood programs and community groups.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the reaction of the main character to events in "Before the End of Summer." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. Encourage students to pay special attention to the language Grant Moss uses in the dialogue and in descriptions of characters to reveal the personalities of characters.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to consider why a story about a ten-year-old is in a ninth-grade anthology. Lead them to the idea that the difficult subject and theme make the story more suitable for readers their age and older than for children.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes **point of view** and the fact that the story is seen through the eyes of young Bennie. You may wish to ask students what is gained by using such a point of view in terms of **characterization** and **dramatic irony**.

## Before the End of Summer

After students have read the story, use the margin annotations to guide a discussion of the **plot** and the main character's reaction to the events.

**1** Reader immediately senses cause-and-effect relationship between visit of doctor and grandmother's telling Bennie to go play.

**2** **Characterization.** Isolated rural **setting** provides index to boy's character. He often plays alone, but wishes he had someone else to play with.

**3** **Foreshadowing.** Suspense builds as reference is made to impending occurrence.

**4** **Point of view.** Story unfolds through boy's eyes; he will not, himself, understand everything he sees and hears.

**5** **Why doesn't grandmother want anyone to know?** She wants to spare others from worry.

# Before the End of Summer

GRANT MOSS, JR.

*The events in this story are told in the third person, from the point of view of one character, so that the reader is made aware of what Bennie observes, thinks, and feels. In what way is this point of view different from the first-person point of view?*

**1** When Dr. Frazier came, Bennie's grandmother told him to run down to the spring and wade in the stream that flowed from it across the pasture field to Mr. Charley Miller's pond, or play under the big oak tree that stood between her field and Mr. Charley Miller's. He started along the path, but when he was about midway to the spring he stopped. He had waded in the stream and caught minnows all that morning. He had played under the oak tree all yesterday afternoon. He had asked his grandmother to let him walk the mile and a half down the road to James and Robert Lee Stewart's to play, but she had not let him go. There was nothing he wanted to do alone. He wanted someone to play with. He turned and went back and crept under the window of his grandmother's room. Their voices floated low and quiet out into the cool shade that lay over **5** the house.

**3** "How long will it be?" he heard his grandmother say.

"Before the end of summer."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes. You should have sent for me long ago."

"I've passed my threescore and ten years. I'm eighty-four."

**4** What did they mean? Perhaps he ought not to be listening.

"How will it come? Tell me, Doctor. I can stand it."

"There will be sharp, quick pains like the ones you've been having. Your heart cannot stand many more attacks. It grows weaker with each one, even though you're able to go about your work as you did before the attack came. I'm going to leave you a prescription for some pills that will kill the pain almost instantly. But that's about all they will do. When an attack comes, take two with a glass of water. They'll make you drop off to sleep. One time you won't wake up."

Now Bennie understood. But he could not turn and run away.

There was a brief silence. Then his grandmother said, "Don't tell Birdie nor anybody else."

"But you can't stay here alone with the child all day long. Why, he's only ten years old."

"I know. . . . Doctor, there ain't anyone to come stay with me. Birdie must go to the Fieldes' to work. You know it's just Birdie, the boy, and me. I got no close kin. My husband, my three sons, and my other daughter's been



### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

In early July, ten-year-old Bennie Wilson overhears the doctor tell his grandmother that she will die before the end of summer. The doctor gives her pills to make her sleep when she has heart attacks. Bennie runs and cries when he

hears the news, but he does not tell anyone what he has heard. During the summer, Bennie has a hard choice to make—to give in to his emotions or to continue to pretend that he doesn't know the truth about his grandmother.

### PRESENTATION

In "Before the End of Summer," students have an opportunity to study a skillfully controlled point of view. The story is told from the perspective of Bennie, a sensitive and observant boy, but Bennie is not the narrator of the story.



*Farm Boy* (1941) by Charles Alston. Oil on canvas.

Atlanta University Collection of Afro-American Art

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

The farm boy in the painting looks as if he is returning to the house after doing his chores. There are many chores on a farm and many different types of farms. Whether the primary "crop" is animal or vegetable, the average farm follows a consistent layout. The *farmhouse* is similar to its urban counterpart, although it may have a few more bedrooms, as farm families are often large. The *barn* might be either a "stall barn," with each animal confined to its own stall, or a "free-roaming barn," where the animals can move about at will. (Horses traditionally are kept in stalls, while sheep, goats, pigs, and livestock live in enclosed pastures without shelter.) Finally, there will be one or more buildings dedicated to storage, ranging from tobacco barns to feed bins to grain silos.

#### About the Artist

Charles Alston (1907–1972) was born in Charlotte, North Carolina. He earned degrees at Columbia University in New York and was the recipient of several fellowships and grants that helped launch his career.

He is best known for his murals, such as the one depicting the history of medicine that adorns the facade of Harlem Hospital in New York City. In addition, he did many paintings and sculptures, many of which are in the collections of IBM and the Detroit Museum.

The reader is engaged simultaneously in perceiving events as Bennie perceives them and in interpreting them from an adult, objective perspective beyond Bennie's understanding.

The textbook questions guide students in thoughtful consideration of Bennie's problem,

his growth in understanding, and the author's use of **limited third-person point of view**. In addition, you may want to explore values of family and community in "Before the End of Summer." Small groups might prompt discussion by dramatizing scenes such as the one on pp. 112–

114 with Dr. Frazier, Hannah, and a narrator; the one on pp. 121–122 with Hannah, Birdie, Bennie, and a narrator; or the final scene on pp. 122–123 with Bennie, Hannah, and a narrator.

**6** Grandmother makes distinction between "knowing death" and "being used to it"; perhaps she finds death hard to accept.

**7** **Characterization.** Grandmother is conscientious about paying bill though doctor is reluctant to accept her money.

**8** **Setting.** Reference to horse-drawn buggy gives clue to story's time setting—probably early 1900s.

**9** **Description.** Grandmother's eyes reflect her age (buried in "mass of wrinkles"). They also show that she is kind and loves her grandson very much ("danced and twinkled").

**10** **Why does Bennie run away?** Answers will vary. Maybe out of fear, or grief, or both.

**11** **Characterization.** Bennie's wild run does not help him escape dread of his grandmother's death; his hard running and crying express intensity of his feelings.

**12** **Why would Bennie now dread being alone with his grandmother?** Perhaps hiding his knowledge and thoughts will be hard.

dead for years now. You see, I know death,  
**6** Doctor, I know it well. I'm just not use to it."  
"No one is," Dr. Frazier said.

"Here's what I want to do. I'll go on just like before. There ain't nothin' else for me to do. When an attack comes, I'll take the two pills and I'll send Bennie runnin' down the road for May Mathis. She'll come. May will come. I know nobody I'd rather have set beside me than May. I knowed her all my life. Me and her done talked about this thing many times. It's July now. July the seventh. Then August—then September. But here I go runnin' on and  
**7** on. Let me get your money. You've got to be paid. You've got to live."

"Please," Dr. Frazier said.

"No harm meant."

In a moment, Bennie heard them walking out onto the porch through the door of her room. Then he could see them as they crossed  
**8** the yard to the gate, where Dr. Frazier's horse and buggy stood. He was a little man, with a skin that was almost black. He climbed into his buggy and started up the road toward the town, which was three miles away, and she stood and looked after him. Her back was to the house. People said that Bennie's grandmother had Indian blood in her veins, for she had high cheekbones and her nose was long  
**9** and straight, but her mouth was big. Her eyes seemed as though they were buried way back in her head, in a mass of wrinkles. They danced and twinkled whenever they looked at him. She was a big woman, and she wore long full skirts that came all the way to the ground.

She closed the gate and started back to the house, and it came to Bennie that he was alone with her, and that she was going to die soon.  
**10** He turned and ran noiselessly across the backyard, through the back gate, and down the path to the spring.

When he reached the spring, he kept run-

ning. He ran across the pasture field and up the hill to the barbed-wire fence that divided his grandmother's land from Mr. Charley Miller's. He threw himself to the ground and rolled under the fence, picked himself up on the other side, and ran through Mr. Charley Miller's field of alfalfa and into the woods, until at last he fell exhausted in the cool damp grass of a shaded clearing.

His grandmother was going to die. She might even be dead now. She was going to lie cold and still, in a long black casket that would be put into a hearse that would take her to church in town. The Reverend Isaiah Jones would preach her funeral. People would cry, because people liked his grandmother. His  
**11** mother would cry. He would cry. And now he was crying, and he could not stop crying.

But at last he did, and he sat up and took from his pocket the clean white rag that his grandmother had given him to use as a handkerchief and dried his eyes. He must get up  
**12** and go back to the house. He would have to be alone with his grandmother until his mother came home from the Fieldses' after she had cooked their supper. And he must tell no one what he had heard Dr. Frazier say to his grandmother.

He found her sitting in her big rocking chair, her hands clasped in her lap. "You been gone a long time," she said. "The water bucket's empty. Take it and go fill it at the spring. Time for me to be gettin' up from here and cookin' supper."

When he got back from the spring, he found her laying a fire in the kitchen stove.

It was nearly dark when he saw his mother coming, and he ran to meet her. She looked at him closely and said, "Bennie, why on earth did you run so fast?"

He could only say breathlessly, "I don't know." He added quickly, "What did you bring me?" Sometimes she brought him a piece of

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage can be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying the main idea. Ask students which of the following best states the main idea of the passage: A. Bennie's feelings about his grandmother have

not changed. (Contradicted. Passage contradicts this statement.) B. In the same way he feels toward certain other people, Bennie fears being near his grandmother as she prepares to die. (Correct. Statement is accurate, relevant, and appropriate in scope.) C. Bennie does not go

close to Miss Sally. (Inappropriate in scope. Does not account for all the important information in the passage.) D. Bennie does not go near Dr. Frazier for fear of receiving an inoculation. (Irrelevant. Passage does not mention inoculation.)

cake or pie, or the leg of chicken from the Fieldses'. Today she did not have anything.

It was a long time before he went to sleep that night.

- 13 The next day, he stayed outdoors and only went into the house when his grandmother called him to do something for her. She did not notice.

On Sunday, his mother did not go to the Fieldses'. In the morning, they went to church. That afternoon, Mr. Joe Bailey drove up to the house in his horse and buggy to take Bennie's mother for a buggy ride. She had put on her pretty blue-flowered dress and her big wide-brimmed black straw hat with the red roses around its crown and the black ribbon that fell over the brim and down her back. She looked very pretty and as pleased as she could be. Bennie wanted to go riding with them. Once, he had asked Mr. Joe if he could go along, and Mr. Joe had grinned and said yes, but Bennie's mother had not been pleased at all, for some reason. This Sunday, after they had gone, his grandmother let him walk the mile and a half down the road to play with James and Robert Lee Stewart.

He knew that his grandmother was preparing to die. He came upon her kneeling in prayer beside her bed and its high headboard that almost touched the ceiling. As she sat in her rocking chair, she said the Twenty-third Psalm. He knew only the first verse: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

- 15 Now he felt toward his grandmother the way he felt toward certain people, only more so. There was a feeling that made people seem strange—a feeling that came from them to you—that made you stand away from them. There was Miss Sally Cannon, his teacher. You did not go close to Miss Sally. She made you sit still and always keep your reader or your spelling book open on your desk, or do your arithmetic problems. If she caught you whispering

or talking, she called you up to the front of the room and gave you several stinging lashes on your leg or across your back with one of the long switches that always lay across her desk. You did not go close to Miss Sally unless you had to. You did not go close to Dr. Frazier or the Reverend Isaiah Jones. Teachers, doctors, and preachers were special people.

- 16 You did not go close to white people, either. Sometimes when he and his grandmother went to town, they would stop at the Fieldses'. They would walk up the long green yard and go around the big red brick house, with its tall white columns, to the kitchen, where his mother was; it always seemed a nice place to be, even on a hot summer day. His mother and his grandmother would chuckle over something that Miss Marion Fields or Mr. Ridley Fields had done. They would stop smiling the minute Miss Marion came into the room, and they would become like people waiting in the vestibule of a church for the prayer to be finished so they could go in. He knew that he acted the same way.

- 18 Miss Marion had light-brown hair and light-brown eyes. His grandmother said that she was like a sparrow, for she was a tiny woman. She always wore a dress that was pretty enough to wear to church. The last time he was at the Fieldses', Miss Marion came into the kitchen. After she had spoken to his grandmother, she turned to him. He was sitting in a chair near the window, and he felt himself stiffen both inside and outside. She said, "I declare, Birdie, Bennie's the prettiest colored child I ever did see. Lashes long as a girl's. Is he a good boy, Hannah?"

"He's a quiet child," his grandmother said. "Sometimes I think he's too quiet, but he's a good child—at least when I got my eyes on him." They all laughed.

"I'm sure Bennie's good," Miss Marion said. "Be a good boy, Bennie. Eat plenty and grow

### 13

**Characterization.** Bennie avoids being with his grandmother, yet he still has keen sense of responsibility and obedience.

### 14

**Why was Bennie's mother not pleased when Bennie asked to go with them?** She wanted to be alone with man she was dating.

### 15

Bennie compares his new feeling toward his grandmother to his feelings toward others; although reasons are different, he now fears being near her, too.

### 16

Bennie's feelings are based on limited experience with teachers, doctors, preachers, and white people, who all seem strange to him.

### 17

**Simile.** Comparison suggests atmosphere of forced gravity and solemnity.

### 18

**Characterization.** In addition to direct physical description, Miss Marion is characterized indirectly through her patronizing words to Bennie.



19

Miss Marion automatically assumes Bennie will want to work for Ridleys when he is "big enough."

20

**Description.** Bennie's perception of May Mathis suggests again his feeling of distance from others.

21

**Foreshadowing.** Miss May hints she is near death.

22

**How does Bennie know what the topic of conversation will be?** He has heard the women discuss preparations for death many times.

23

Bennie now has new perception of preparation for death; he no longer interprets their conversation as idle talk with no real meaning.

24

**Why is Bennie "too frightened to move"?** Can tell from pills that grandmother has had attack and fears she may be dying.

25

Grandmother has also wondered if this attack might end in death, as indicated by her bewilderment and "queer smile" when she sees Bennie.

19 strong, and when you're big enough to work, Mr. Ridley will be glad to give you work here on his place. We're so glad to have your mother here with us. Now, be good, won't you?"

"Yes, Ma'am," he answered.

"Birdie, give him a piece of that lemon pie you baked for supper. Well, Hannah, it's been nice talking with you again. Always stop on your way to town."

Two weeks to the day after Dr. Frazier's visit, Miss May Mathis came to see his grandmother. She was much shorter than his grandmother—a plump woman, who always wore long black-and-white checked gingham dresses that fell straight down from her high full breasts to her knees and then flared outward. Her chin was sharp, with folds of flesh around it. Her nose was wide and flat. She had small, snapping black eyes. Her skin was like cream that had been kept too long and into which hundreds of tiny black specks had fallen.

As she came into the yard, she asked Bennie if his grandmother was at home. She said she would sit on the porch, where it was cool. He ran into the house to tell his grandmother that she was there.

His grandmother put away her sewing and went out on the porch. "May, I'm glad you come. I've been lookin' for you," she said.

"I'd been here sooner, but my stomach's 24 been givin' me trouble lately. Sometimes I think my time ain't long."

"Hush—hush! You'll live to see me put 25 under the ground."

"Well, the day before yesterday I spent half the day in bed. I thought I'd have to send John for you," Miss May answered, and she went into a long account of the illness that troubled her.

Bennie got up from the edge of the porch

and ran around the house. The two old women paid no attention to his going. He knew what his grandmother would say to Miss May. She would tell Miss May how she wanted to be dressed for burial. She would name the song she wanted to be sung over her. He had heard the same conversation many times. Now it was different. What they were talking about would 23 soon "come to pass," as his grandmother would say. Miss May did not know, but he knew.

He went out of the back gate and down the path to the spring. He waded in the stream awhile, catching minnows in his hands and then letting them go. He went across the pasture field. He broke off a persimmon bush to use as a switch, and he chased his grandmother's cow about the pasture a bit. But the cow was old and soon grew tired of moving when he hit her with the switch. Then he went to the big oak tree that stood between the fields and sat down. He stayed there until he saw Miss May Mathis going out of the front gate.

The July days went slowly by, one much like another. It grew hotter and hotter.

One day when he walked into the house after playing a long time in the stream and the pasture field, he found his grandmother quietly sleeping in her big rocking chair. He saw a bottle full of big white pills on the dresser. It had not been there when he left the house. An empty glass stood beside the pills. He felt too 24 frightened to move. Her breast was rising and falling evenly. She stirred and then opened her eyes.

She seemed dazed and not to see him for a moment. Then her lips curved into a queer smile, and a twinkle came into her eyes. "Must have dropped off to sleep like a baby," she said. "Run outdoors and play. I'll set here awhile, and then I'll get up and start supper."

Later on, she called him and asked if he

could make out with milk and cold food from dinner. She left the milking for his mother to do when she came home from the Fieldses'.

**26** But the next morning his grandmother was all right, and he thought she was not going to die that summer, after all.

One morning, a little after his mother had gone to the Fieldses', Mr. John Mathis drove up. He turned his horse and buggy around to face the way he had come. Then he walked up the path to the house. He was a tall, rawboned man with a bullet-shaped head, and he looked exactly like what he was—a deacon in a church.

"What is it, John?" Bennie's grandmother asked.

"It's May. She was sick all day yesterday. Last night I had to get the doctor for her. Jennie Stewart's there now."

"I'll be ready to go in a minute," his grandmother said.

On the way to the Mathises', Bennie sat on the back of the buggy. His grandmother and Mr. John said only a few words. When they reached the house, his grandmother told him to keep very quiet and to be good, and she went inside at once. There were people on the porch, and people continued to come and go. It was midafternoon, and still his grandmother

**27** had not come from within the house. A Ford car drove up to the gate. In it were Philomena Jones and her mother. Philomena was a year

**28** younger than Bennie. She had a sharp little yellow face, big black eyes that went everywhere, and she wore her hair in two long plaits. "Come on," she said, "and let's play something." When they were out of hearing of the grown-up people, she said, "Miss May going to die."

"How do you know?"

"I heard my mama say she was. She's old. When you're old you have to die."

Next, Philomena said, "Your mama's tryin'

to catch Mr. Joe Bailey for a husband. Mama said it's time she's getting another husband if she's ever going to get one."

"You stop talkin'!" Bennie told her.

**29** "She said you pa's been dead nine years now and if your mama don't hurry and take Mr. Joe Bailey—that is, if she can get him—she may never get a chance to marry again."

**30** "If you don't stop talkin', I'll hit you!"

"No, you won't. I'm not scared of you, even if you are a boy, and I'll say what I want to. Mama said, 'Birdie Wilson's in her forties, if she a day, and if a woman lets herself get into her forties without marryin', her chance are mighty slim after that.' I'm goin' to marry when I'm twenty."

**31** "Nobody'd want you. You talk too much."

"I don't, either."

"I won't play with you. I'm goin' back to the porch," he said.

Philomena stayed in the yard a little longer. She carried on an imaginary conversation with a person who seemed as eager to talk as she. After a while, she ran back to the porch and sat down and gave her attention to what the grown-up people were saying, now and then putting in a word herself.

Then his grandmother came out from the house. People stopped talking at the sight of her face. "May's gone," she said.

The people on the porch bowed their heads, and their faces became as though they were already at Miss May Mathis's funeral.

His grandmother looked very tired. After a moment she said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

**32** There was a silence. Then she spoke again. "I thought May would do for me what I have to do for her now." She turned and went back into the house. Some of the women rose and followed her.

The people who remained on the porch spoke in low voices. Someone wondered when

**26**

Bennie's fear subsides as his grandmother regains strength; situation that had seemed serious day before now seems unreal as hope is renewed.

**27**

**Setting.** Mention of automobile serves as additional clue to time setting. Although rural poor still used buggies for transportation, urbanites who could afford them had cars.

**28**

**Characterization.** Philomena is characterized as a little busybody ("eyes that went everywhere"). She is a foil for quiet, sensitive Bennie.

**29**

Philomena is repeating her mother's unkind interpretation of Bennie's mother's courtship; her words show insensitivity to Bennie's feelings.

**30**

**Why does Bennie threaten to hit Philomena?** Bennie correctly interprets her words as unfeeling and unkind; he resents her know-it-all attitude and is shocked at news.

**31**

Children are unaware of humor in their remarks; Bennie's threat does not work, so he tries to silence her with words.

**32**

Grandmother expected to die before May.

33

Bennie's perception of grandmother's eyes as "taking a great sad rest" contrasts with earlier description of her eyes as "dancing and twinkling."

34

**Characterization.** Bennie's feelings are changing from fear to sympathy; his grandmother will not have May to comfort her when she dies.

35

Bennie's dread of seeing May's body is normal, especially for a child his age; also serves to remind him of grandmother's coming death.

36

*What does Bennie not understand about the tears of the family and friends?* They are crying partly for themselves; they will miss May.

37

Bible speaks of resurrection when dead rise from graves at end of historical time.

38

Use to answer study question 2, p. 123.

39

Bennie realizes "one" grandmother refers to is attack that weakened her temporarily.

40

Dr. Frazier and grandmother speak with codeword words. "Now?" asks where Bennie will be sent now that May is gone.

the funeral would be. Someone wondered if Miss May's sister Ethel, who lived in St. Louis, would come. Someone hoped it would not rain 36 the day of the funeral.

Then Mr. John Mathis and Bennie's grandmother came out on the porch. Mr. John said, 37 "Hannah, you done all you could do. May couldn't have had a better friend. You're tired now. I'll send you home."

33 At home, his grandmother seemed not to notice him. Her eyes seemed to be taking a great sad rest. She sent him to the spring to get water to cook supper.

34 As he walked down the path, he thought about his grandmother. He felt more sorry for her than he felt fear of her. Miss May Mathis was dead; he could not run and get her now.

On Sunday afternoon at two o'clock at the Baptist Church, Miss May Mathis's funeral service was held. There was a procession of buggies, surreys, and even a few automobiles from the house to the church. Mr. Joe Bailey 38 came and took Bennie's mother, his grandmother, and him to church. The funeral was a long one. He sat beside his grandmother and listened to the prayers, the songs, and the sermon, all the time dreading the moment when the flowers would be taken from the gray casket, the casket would be opened, and the people would file by to see the body for the last time.

39 The Reverend Isaiah Jones described Heaven as a land flowing with milk and honey, a place where people ate fruit from the tree of life, wore golden slippers, long white robes, and starry crowns, and rested forever. The Reverend Isaiah Jones was certain that Miss May Mathis was there, resting in the arms of 40 Jesus, done with the sins and sorrows of this world. Bennie wondered why Mr. John covered his face with his hands, and why Miss May's sister Ethel, who had come all the way from St. Louis, cried out, and why people

cried, if Miss May was so happy in this land. It seemed that they would be glad for her, so glad they would not cry. Or did they cry because they were glad? He could not understand. The Reverend Jones said that they would see Miss May on the Resurrection morning. Bennie could not understand this, either.

At last the gray casket was opened, and people began to file by it. And at last he was close. His mother went by, and then Mr. Joe. Now his grandmother. The line of people stopped, waiting expectantly. His grandmother stood and looked down on Miss May for a long time. She did not cry out. She simply stood there and looked down, and finally she moved on. Now he was next. Miss May Mathis looked as though she had simply combed her hair and piled it on top of her head, put on her best black silk dress, pinned her big old brooch to its lace collar, picked up a white handkerchief with one hand, and then decided that instead of going to church she would sleep a little while. As he looked down on her, he was not as afraid as he'd thought he would be.

Outside the church, as the procession was forming to go to the graveyard, Dr. Frazier came up to his grandmother and asked how she was.

"As well as could be expected, Doctor," his grandmother said. And then, in a low voice, 39 "I've had only one."

"You got through it all right."

"Yes."

"And this?"

"I've managed to get through it."

"You will be careful."

"Yes."

"Now?"

"He'll have to go to the Stewarts'."

They did not know that he understood what they were talking about, even if none of the other people around them did. He heard two women whispering. One said to the other, "It's



41 wonderful the way Aunt Hannah took it.” He felt very proud of his grandmother.

Now his grandmother’s footsteps were slower  
42 as she moved about the house and yard. He kept the garden and the flower beds along the yard fences weeded, the stove box full of wood, the water bucket full all the time, without her having to ask him to do these things for her. He overheard her say to his mother, “Child does everything without being told. It ain’t natural.”

“Reckon he’s not well?” his mother asked anxiously.

“Don’t think so. He eats well. Maybe the trouble is the child don’t have nobody to play with every day. He’ll be all right when fall comes and school starts.”

August came, and it grew hotter. The sun climbed up the sky in the morning and down  
43 the sky in the evening like a tired old man with a great load on his back going up and down a hill. Then one hot mid-August day dawned far hotter and sultrier than the one just past. It grew still hotter during the early part of the morning, but by midday there was a change, for there was a breeze, and in the west a few dark clouds gathered in the sky. His grandmother said, “I believe the rain will come at last.”

About three o’clock, the wind rose suddenly. It bent the top of the big oak tree that stood in the yard. There were low rumbles of thunder.

“Bennie, Bennie, come! Let’s get the chickens up!” his grandmother called to him.

By the time the chickens were safe in the henhouse and chicken coops, it was time to go into the house and put the windows down. The wind lifted the curtains almost to the ceiling. They got the windows down. His grandmother went into the kitchen. He went out on the porch. He wanted to watch the clouds, for he

had never seen any bigger or blacker or quite so low to the earth—he was sure they must be  
44 touching the ground somewhere. He wanted to see what the wind did to the trees, the corn, and the grass.

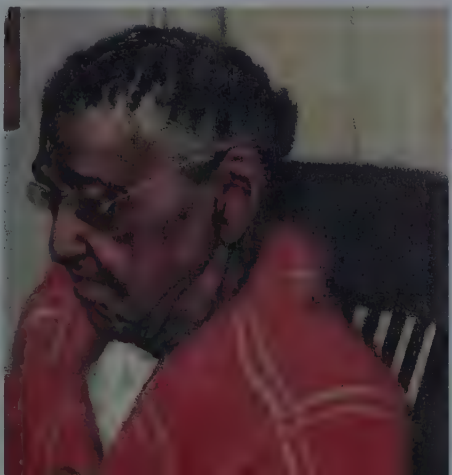
At last the rain fell, first in great drops that were blown onto the edge of the porch by the wind and felt cool and good as they touched his face. They made him want to run out into the yard. Then the rain came so quickly and so heavily, and with it so much wind, that it came up on the porch and almost pushed him back into the house. The thunder roared and there were flashes of lightning.

“Bennie, Bennie, where are you?” his grandmother called, and when he went inside she said, “Set down—set down in the big chair there or come into my room if you want to. I’m goin’ to just set in my rocker.”

“I’ll stay here,” he said, and he went to the big chair near the fireplace and sat down.

“There—there—just set there. I’ll leave the door open.”

He tried to keep from thinking what might happen if his grandmother had one of her spells, but he could not. He went to the fire—  
Detail from *Mending Socks* (1924) by Archibald John Motley, Jr. Oil on canvas.



North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh

41 Bennie learns from his grandmother’s calm and dignified acceptance of May’s death; women’s words indicate grandmother’s behavior is courageous.

42 Reader understands Bennie’s motives, his understanding of grandmother’s condition.

43 What does the comparison of the sun to “a tired old man” suggest? Days are long and burdensome.

44 Full of youthful curiosity, Bennie watches unusual force of storm in excited awe.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Relating Expression Skills

Although Bennie and his grandmother never openly discuss their feelings, they show their love for each other in their daily actions. Have students look at *Mending Socks* as a portrait of a grandmother doing something thoughtful for her beloved grandson. Students could think of ways Bennie shows his love for his grandmother and draw pictures of these simple but eloquent expressions of caring.

45

**Simile.** Comparison to tears underscores prevailing mood of sadness.

46

Bennie, at first frozen with fear, now faithfully follows his grandmother's directions.

47

**Characterization.** Grandmother, although in pain, thinks first about allaying Bennie's fears.

48

**What does Bennie's grandmother tell him to do? Why?** Tells him to leave room in order to spare him from possible experience of seeing her die.

49

Grandmother uses her little bit of strength to make sure Bennie will not witness her death.

50

Bennie bravely faces fear and loneliness and turns thoughts back to storm.

51

In excitement, Bennie forgets for a moment that his grandmother may not be alive.

52

Grandmother has recovered from the "spell"; Bennie notices that she looks rested and well.

place. The back of the fireplace was wet; water

45 stood on it in drops that looked like tears on a face. He stood and looked at it awhile, then he sat down in the big chair. There was nothing else to do but to sit there.

He heard her cry out. The cry was sharp and quick. Then it was cut off.

She called him. "Bennie! Bennie!" Her voice was thick.

He could not move.

"Bennie!"

He went into the room where she was.

She sat on the side of her bed. She was breathing hard, and in one hand she had the bottle of white pills. "Get me a glass of water. One of my spells done come over me."

46 He went into the kitchen and got a glass from the kitchen safe and filled it with water from the bucket that sat on the side table. Then he went back to her and gave her the water.

She took it and put two pills in her mouth and gulped them down with the water. She was breathing hard. "Pull off my shoes," she said.

As he was unlacing the high-top shoes she always wore, she gave a little cry. He felt her body tremble. "Just a bit of pain. Don't worry. I'm all right," she said. "It's gone," she added a moment later.

When he got her shoes off, he lifted her legs onto the bed, and she lay back and closed her eyes. "Go into the front room," she said, "and close the door behind you and stay there until the storm is past. I'm goin' to drop off to sleep—and if I'm still asleep when the storm is over, just let me sleep until your mama comes. 47 Don't come in here. Don't try to wake me. 'Twon't do me no harm to take me a long good sleep."

He could not move. He could only stand and stare at her.

49 "Hear me? Go on, I tell you. Go on—don't, I'll get up from here and skin you alive."

He crept from the room, closing the door after him.

50 He went to the big chair and sat down. He must not cry. Crying could not help him. There was nothing to do but to sit there until the storm was past.

The rain and the wind came steadily now. He sat back in the big chair. He wondered about his mother. Was she safe at the Fieldses? He wondered if the water had flowed into the henhouse and under the chicken coops, where the little chickens were. If it had, some of the little chickens might get drowned. The storm lasted so long that it began to seem to him that it had always been there.

At last he became aware that the room was growing lighter and the rain was not so hard. The thunder and lightning were gone. Then, almost as suddenly as it had begun, the storm was over.

He got up and went out on the porch. Everything was clean. Everything looked new. There were little pools of water everywhere, and it was cool. There were a few clouds in the sky, but they were white and light gray. He looked across the field toward Mr. Charley Miller's, and he opened his eyes wide when he saw that the storm had blown down the big oak tree. He started to run back into the house to tell his grandmother that the storm had blown the tree down, and then he stopped. After a minute, he stepped down from the porch. The wet grass felt good on his bare feet.

51 He felt his grandmother in the doorway even before he heard her call. He turned and looked at her. She had put on her shoes and the long apron she always wore. She came out on the porch, and he decided that she looked as though her sleep had done her good.

He remembered the tree, and he cried, "Look—look, Grannie! The storm blowed down the tree between your field and Mr. Charley Miller's."

53 "That tree was there when me and your grandpa came here years and years ago," she said. "The Lord saw fit to let it be blowed down in this storm. I—I—" She broke off and went back into the house.

He ran into the house and said to her, "I'm going down to the spring. I bet the stream's 56 deep as a creek."

54 "Don't you get drowned like old Pharaoh's army," she said.

55 The storm drove away the heat, for the days were now filled with cool winds that came and rattled the cornstalks and the leaves on the oak tree in the yard. There were showers. The nights were long and cool; the wind came into the rooms, gently pushing aside the neat white curtains to do so.

One morning when he went into the kitchen to get hot water and soap to take to the back porch to wash his face and hands, he found his mother and grandmother busy talking. They stopped the moment they saw him. His mother's face seemed flushed and uncomfortable, but her eyes were very bright.

"Done forgot how to say good mornin' to a body?" his grandmother said.

"Good mornin', Grannie. Good mornin', Mama."

"That's more like it."

"Good mornin', Bennie," his mother said. She looked at him, and he had a feeling that she was going to come to him and take him in her arms the way she used to do when he was a little boy. But she did not.

His grandmother laughed. "Well, son, Mr. Joe Bailey went and popped the question to your mama last night."

His mother blushed. He did not know what to say to either of them. He just stood and looked at them.

"What you goin' to say to that?" his mother said.

All he could think to say was "It's all right."

His grandmother laughed again, and his mother smiled at him the way she did when he ran down the road to meet her and asked her to let him carry the packages that she had.

"When will they be married?" he asked.

"Soon," his mother said.

"Where will they live—here?"

"That ain't been settled yet," his grandmother said. "Nothin' been settled. They just got engaged last night while they were settin' in the front room and you was sleepin' in your 57 bed. Things can be settled later." She gave a sigh that his mother did not hear. But he heard it.

He poured water from the teakettle into the wash pan and took the pan out on the back porch and washed and dried his hands. He looked across the fields and hills. The sun had not come up yet, but the morning lay clear and soft and quiet as far as his eyes could see.

His mother was going to marry Mr. Joe Bailey. He did mind a little. He knew that was what she wanted. He liked Mr. Joe. When Mr. Joe smiled at him, he always had to smile back at him; something seemed to make him do so.

After his mother had gone to the Fieldses', he and his grandmother sat down to breakfast at the table in the kitchen. His grandmother never ate a meal without saying grace. Usually she gave thanks just for the food that they 59 were about to eat. This morning she asked the Lord to bless his mama, Mr. Joe, and him, and she thanked the Lord for answering all her prayers.

As they ate, she talked to him. She spoke as though she were talking to herself, expecting no answer from him, but he knew that she meant for him to listen to her words, and he knew why she was talking to him. "Joe Bailey will make your mama a good husband and you a good father to take the place of your father

53

*How does Bennie's grandmother respond to the news of the fallen tree? Accepts loss but feels regretful, perhaps seeing fallen tree as representing her own demise.*

54

*Allusion.* Reference to Egyptian ruler whose army drowned in Red Sea while pursuing the Israelites.

55

*Foreshadowing.* Change in weather corresponds to change taking place in Bennie and hints of grandmother's approaching death.

56

Bennie addresses his grandmother and refers to his mother and Joe Bailey as "they," perhaps indicating his feeling of temporary alienation from mother.

57

Bennie knows that "later" means after his grandmother's death.

58

*Characterization.* Bennie's response to his mother's engagement is normal. "He did mind a little" suggests a twinge of jealousy.

59

*What is the special meaning of the grandmother's prayer of thanks? She is thankful that Birdie and Bennie will have a secure family life after her own death.*



60

*What does Bennie's grandmother's warning to him reveal about her knowledge of human relations?* Understands jealousy; realizes he could cause friction between his mother and Joe Bailey.

61

Bennie's grandmother seems to understand his concerns about place in the coming marriage.

62

**Characterization.** Grandmother changes subject, suggesting she is very practical. Perhaps talk of future reminds her of coming death.

63

**Foreshadowing.** John's comment recalls doctor's prediction and foreshadows grandmother's imminent death.

64

Change in her face suggests she is thinking of doctor's prediction that death will come "before end of summer."

65

**Simile.** "Like a nice clean sheet" suggests that calm morning makes Bennie feel secure and confident.

66

Grandmother's eyes are different now, suggesting attack will be different from previous attacks.

who you never knew. The Lord took your father when your father was still young, but that was the Lord's will. Joe Bailey will be good to you, for he is a good man. Mind him. Don't make trouble between him and your mama. Hear me?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

61 "Don't you worry about where you'll stay. You'll be with your mama. Hear me?"  
"Yes'm."

She sat silent for a moment, and then she added, "Well, no matter if your mama is going to marry Mr. Joe Bailey. We got to work today just like we always has. No matter what comes, we have to do the little things that our hands find to do. Soon as you finish eatin', go to the spring and get water and fill the pot and the tubs."

August drew toward its close, but the soft cool days stayed on, and they were calm and peaceful. His grandmother cooked the meals, and washed and ironed their own clothes and those that his mother brought home from the Fieldses' and Mr. Charley Miller's. Sometimes Bennie wondered if she had put from her mind the things that Dr. Frazier had said to her that day he listened under the window. Sometimes it seemed to him that he had never crept close to the window and listened to her and Dr. Frazier. The summer seemed just like last summer and the summer before that.

One day near the end of the month, Mr. John Mathis stopped by the house on his way to town. He was on horseback, riding a big black horse whose sides glistened. He hailed Bennie's grandmother, and she came out on the porch to pass the time of day with him.

"Ever see such a fine summer day, John?" she said.

63 "It's not a summer day, Hannah. It's a fall day. It's going to be an early fall this year."

64 "Think so?" his grandmother asked. Her face changed, but Mr. John did not notice.

"I can feel it. I can feel it in the air. The smell of fall is here already." Then they fell to talking about the church and people they knew.

She stood on the porch and watched Mr. John ride up the road on his big black horse. Often that day, she came out on the porch and stood and looked across the fields and hills.

When Bennie went outside for the first time the next morning and looked around him, he did not see a single cloud in the sky. The quiet that lay about him felt like a nice clean sheet you pull over your head before you go to sleep at night that shuts out everything to make a space both warm and cool just for you. The day grew warm. A little after midday, clouds began to float across the sky, but for the most part it remained clear and very blue. He played in the yard under the oak tree, and then he went down to the spring and played. In the afternoon, he rolled his hoop up and down the road in front of the house. He grew tired of this and went and sat under the tree.

He was still sitting under the tree when his grandmother cried out. She gave a sharp sudden cry, like the cry people make when they've been stung by a bee or a wasp. He got to his feet. Then he heard her call. "Bennie! Bennie!"

He ran into the house and into her room.

She sat in her big rocking chair, leaning forward a little, her hands clutching the arms of the chair. She was breathing hard. He had never seen her eyes as they were now. "Water—the pills—in the dresser."

He ran into the kitchen and got a glass of water and ran back to the room and gave it to her and then went to the dresser and got the bottle of pills. He unscrewed the top and took out two of them and gave them to her.

She put the pills in her mouth and gulped

them down with water. Then she leaned back and closed her eyes. At last she breathed easier, and in a few moments she opened her eyes. "Run and get—get Miss—No, go get your mama. Hurry! Your grandmother is very sick."

It was a long way to the Fieldses'—even longer than to the Stewarts! He stood still and looked at her. She was a big woman, and the chair was a big chair. Now she seemed smaller—lost in the chair.

"Hurry—hurry, child."

67 "Grannie, I'll stay with you until you go to sleep, if you want me to," he heard himself say. "No! No! Hurry!"

68 "I heard you and Dr. Frazier talking that day."

"Child! Child! You knew all the time?"

"Yes, Grannie."

"When I drop off to sleep, I won't wake up. Your grandmother won't wake up here."

"I know."

"You're not afraid?"

He shook his head.

She seemed to be thinking hard, and at last she said, "Set down, child. Set down beside me."

He pulled up the straight chair and sat down facing her.

"Seems like I don't know what to say to you, Bennie. Be a good boy. Seems like I can't think any more. Everything leavin' me—leavin' me."

"I'll set here until you go to sleep, and then I'll go and get Mama."

"That's a good boy," she said, and she closed her eyes.

He sat still and quiet until her breath came softly and he knew that she was asleep. It was not long. Then he got up and walked from the room and out of the house.

He did not look back, and he did not run until he was a good way down the road. Then

suddenly he began to run, and he ran as fast as he could.

## Reading Check

1. How does Bennie learn that his grandmother will die before the end of summer?
2. Whose funeral does Bennie attend with his grandmother?
3. What news do his mother and grandmother give him?
4. What does Bennie say when his grandmother tells him to leave as she is dying?
5. What does Bennie do after his grandmother goes to sleep?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. At the beginning of the story, Bennie learns that his grandmother is expected to die before the end of summer. At the end of the story, Bennie witnesses her death. **a.** Compare his reactions in the opening and closing scenes of the story. **b.** What change would you say has taken place in his understanding of death?
2. Throughout the story Bennie is reminded of his grandmother's impending death. How does Miss May's funeral prepare Bennie to face the death of someone he loves?
3. This story is told from the point of view of a ten-year-old. **a.** How does the author convince you that Bennie's perceptions are those of a child? **b.** What aspects of the adult world are beyond Bennie's grasp?

67

*Why does Bennie refuse to leave his dying grandmother? Attitude toward death has changed; he wants to comfort her.*

68

*Climax. Bennie reveals that he knows she is dying.*

### READING CHECK

1. Overhears doctor (p. 112).
2. Miss May Mathis (p. 118).
3. His mother will marry Joe Bailey (p. 121).
4. He will stay with her until she goes to sleep (p. 123).
5. Goes to get his mother (p. 123).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. In opening scene, he runs until he is exhausted and cries; at end, he refuses to leave, talks calmly, walks down road before he starts running. 1b. He has lost most of his fear of death; is willing to help his grandmother.
2. Thinks Miss May looks as if she had dressed for church and decided to lie down; not as afraid as he had expected.
- 3a. Examples include lack of suspicion when doctor comes. When he learns she will die, he is afraid and runs as far as he can, and feels distant from grandmother. 3b. Doesn't understand why he shouldn't go riding with mother and boyfriend. Watches grandmother, but doesn't know why she does certain things, such as looking at fields and hills.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to cite examples of how Bennie's reactions to events in the story reveal his lack of understanding. Next, ask them to think of examples that show his understanding and sense of responsibility.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Answers will vary. **Point of view** allows readers to see how difficult Bennie's problem is for him and how much he grows in his understanding of life and death and family solidarity. Even when Bennie cannot perceive as much as an older person, readers can understand by closely reading the dialogue and description.

2. We could not know Bennie as well if we did not see the world through his eyes.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Before students begin writing, it would be useful to spend some time discussing the assignment in class. Divide the class into two groups. After reviewing the story, have one group state as clearly as possible what Bennie's reactions to his grandmother's impending death are at the beginning of the story. Have the second group state Bennie's reactions at the end of the story. Tell students that all they have to do to finish their prewriting is to fill in the steps between these two points.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

We are told that the big oak tree was standing when the old woman and her husband came to the land and that Bennie likes to play under the tree. Toward the end of the story, the tree is blown down during a storm. Have students write

an essay in which they examine the symbolic role of the tree in this story.

Bennie's grandmother says, "No matter what comes, we have to do the little things that our hands find to do." Have students discuss what she means by this.

## Literary Elements

### Limited Third-Person Point of View

A writer may sometimes tell a story in the third person from the point of view of a character in the story. "Before the End of Summer" is told from the point of view of Bennie.

Because Bennie is only ten years old, there are many things he does not understand. At the funeral service of May Mathis, he is confused by the mourners' grief when they are told that Miss May is in heaven:

Bennie wondered why Mr. John covered his face with his hands, and why Miss May's sister Ethel, who had come all the way from St. Louis, cried out, and why people cried, if Miss May was so happy in this land. It seemed that they would be glad for her, so glad they would not cry. Or did they cry because they were glad? He could not understand.

The language of the story is also carefully controlled so that Bennie's thoughts are conveyed realistically:

He went to the big chair and sat down. He must not cry. Crying could not help him. There was nothing to do but to sit there until the storm was past.

The rain and the wind came steadily now. He sat back in the big chair. He wondered about his mother. Was she safe at the Fieldses'? He wondered if the water had flowed into the henhouse and under the chicken coops, where the little chickens were. If it had, some of the little chickens might get drowned. The storm lasted so long that it began to seem to him that it had always been there.

In this story the author has chosen to use the **limited third-person point of view**. You know only what Bennie sees and feels. You are not told what the other characters are thinking and  
**1** feeling. Why do you think the author chose to  
**2** tell the story in this way? Would the story have  
been as effective if it had been told from the  
point of view of an adult? Explain.

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Tracing a Character's Thoughts and Feelings

Bennie does not describe himself. However, we know more about him than we do about any other character in the story. Because the story is told from Bennie's point of view, we know his thoughts and feelings about things that happen, sometimes through his actions rather than through his words. Write a paper in which you trace Bennie's reactions to his grandmother's impending death. Use details from the story, and be sure to use quotation marks for any direct quotations from the story.

## About the Author

### Grant Moss, Jr. (1910– )

Grant Moss, Jr., grew up in Winchester, Tennessee. He attended Knoxville College, and he served in the army during World War II. After the war he earned a Master of Arts degree at Columbia University. He has had stories published in *Opportunity*, *The New Yorker*, and *Esence* magazines. After teaching English for twenty-two years at Grambling College in Louisiana, he retired and moved back to his boyhood home town in Tennessee.

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of **omniscient point of view**. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 137 will give students practice in using the dictionary to find words that are part of the regional and Quaker **dialect** in the story.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to recall the kinds of dialects they heard in "Split Cherry Tree" and "Before the End of Summer." Tell them to watch for examples of the Quaker dialect in this story.

# The Pacing Goose

**JESSAMYN WEST**

*The characters in this story are Quakers living in Indiana around the time of the Civil War. In their dialogue, the author reproduces characteristics of Quaker and regional speech.*

<sup>1</sup>Jess sat in the kitchen at the long table by the west window where in winter he kept his grafting tools: the thin-bladed knife, the paper sweet with the smell of beeswax and the resin, the boxes of roots and scions.<sup>1</sup> Jess was a nurseryman and spring meant for him not only <sup>2</sup>spirits' flowering—but the earth's. A week more of moderating weather and he'd be out, still in gum boots, but touching an earth that had thawed, whose riches were once again fluid enough to be sucked upward, toward those burgeonings which by summer would have swelled into Early Harvests, Permaines, and Sweet Bows.<sup>2</sup>

Spring's a various season, Jess thought, no two years the same: comes in with rains, mud deep enough to swallow horse and rider; comes in cold, snow falling so fast it weaves a web; comes in with a warm wind blowing about thy ears and bringing a smell of something flowering, not here, but southaways, across the Ohio, maybe, in Kentucky. Nothing here now but a smell of melting snow—which is no smell

at all, but a kind of prickle in the nose, like a bygone sneeze. Comes in so various, winter put by and always so welcome.

"And us each spring so much the same."

"Thee speaking to me, Jess?"

"Nothing thee'd understand, Eliza."

Spring made Jess discontented with the human race—and with women, if anything, more than men. It looked as if spring put them <sup>3</sup>all in the shade: the season so resourceful and they each year meeting it with nothing changed from last year, digging up roots from the same sassafras thicket, licking sulfur and molasses<sup>3</sup> from the big-bowled spoon.

Behind him the table was set for supper, plates neatly turned to cover the bone-handled knives and forks, spoon vase aglitter with steel well burnished by brick dust, dishes of jam with more light to them than the sun, which was dwindling away, peaked and overcast, outside his window.

<sup>4</sup>"Spring opening up," he said, "and nobody in this house so much as putting down a line of poetry."

3. **sulfur and molasses**: an old-time "spring tonic."

1. **scions** (si'ənz): plant shoots prepared for grafting.

2. **Early . . . Bows**: varieties of apples.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 12 / Selection Test 12 / Reading Check 12 / Vocabulary Tests 6 and 7 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 12

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the **setting** and the regional speech of the story. Tell students that the time of year is also an important part of the setting. It is almost spring as the story opens, and the characters' responses to spring set the events in motion.

## The Pacing Goose

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding students to an understanding of **point of view** and **characterization**.

<sup>1</sup>In first two paragraphs, **omniscient narrator** gives information about Jess that is important to understanding his character and feelings about spring.

<sup>2</sup>*To what does "spirits' flowering" refer?* Jess's good feeling in spring—his spring fever.

<sup>3</sup>"In the shade" suggests that spring is more beautiful than women; spring outshines them.

<sup>4</sup>**Characterization.** Jess's notion that springtime should inspire poetry is somewhat romantic.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Jess loves spring because it is unpredictable, but the season reminds him of how people's habits never seem to vary. Jess tells his wife Eliza that he wishes people had some of the variety of spring. He says that this year there must be a late spring,

since Eliza hasn't yet mentioned a longing for geese—animals Jess particularly dislikes. However, Eliza has already decided to get into the unpredictable spirit of spring; she has bought eight goose eggs, due to hatch in thirty days.

## PRESENTATION

The questions and exercises on pp. 136–138 are intended for class discussion and writing. So much of the appeal of "The Pacing Goose" is in the narrator's friendly tone and in her portrayal of nuances of character that you may want stu-

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The Quaker sect grew from meetings of Christian seekers "waiting on the Lord" during the times of Charles I and the Puritan Revolution. A basic tenet of their beliefs was, and still is, a reliance on guidance from the "Inward Light of God in every man." Members of the Society of Friends in England and the colonies were often persecuted and imprisoned, and in Boston four were executed. The Quakers (also called "Friends") bravely continued their meetings. Many Quakers have been leaders in social movements such as abolition, prison reform, mental health care, religious freedom, women's rights, and international peace.

**5 Characterization.** Eliza's retort reveals her spritely, independent nature; also indicates that her daily chores leave little spare time.

**6 Dialect.** Most striking feature of Quaker dialect is perhaps use of *thee* instead of *you*, and *thy* instead of *your*.

**7** Eliza adapts the old adage "have your cake and eat it too" to suggest that Jess's expectations are unrealistic.

**8** **Humors:** moods.



Detail from *Quaker Meeting* by anonymous nineteenth-century artist.  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bequest of Maxim Karolik

Eliza, who was lifting dried-peach pies from a hot oven, said nothing. She set the four of them in a neat row on the edge of her kitchen cabinet to cool, and slid her pans of cornbread into the oven. Then she turned to Jess, her cheeks red with heat, and her black eyes warm with what she had to say. "Thee'd maybe relish a nice little rhyme for thy supper, Jess Birdwell."

Jess sighed, then sniffed the pies, so rich with ripe peach flavor that the kitchen smelled

like a summer orchard, nothing lacking but the sound of bees. "Now, Eliza," he said, "thee knows I wouldn't have thee anyways altered. Thee..."

"Thee," Eliza interrupted him, "is like all men. Thee wants to have thy poetry and eat it too."

Jess wondered how what he'd felt about spring, a season with the Lord's thumbprint fresh on it, could've led to anything so unspringlike as an argument about a batch of dried-peach pies.

"Eliza," he said firmly, "I didn't mean thee. Though it's crossed my mind sometimes as strange that none of the boys have ever turned, this time of year, to rhyming."

"Josh writes poems," Eliza said.

"Thee ever read what Josh writes, Eliza?"

Eliza nodded.

Ah, well, Jess thought, no use at this late date to tell her what's the difference.

Eliza looked her husband over carefully. "Jess Birdwell," she said, "thee's full of humors. Thy blood needs thinning. I'll boil thee up a good cup of sassafras tea."

Jess turned away from the green and gold sunset and the patches of snow it was gilding and fairly faced the dried-peach pies and Eliza, who was dropping dumplings into a pot of beans.

"That's just it, Eliza," he said. "That's just the rub."

Eliza gave him no encouragement, but he went on anyway. "Earth alters, season to season, spring comes in never two times the same, only us pounding on steady as pump bolts and not freshened by so much as a grass blade."

"Jess, thee's got spring fever."

"I could reckon time and temperature, each spring, by the way thee starts honing<sup>4</sup> for geese. 'Jess, don't thee think we might have a

4. **honing:** yearning.

dents to read aloud passages that provide good answers—or perhaps culminate class presentation with an enjoyable oral reading of the entire story.

Discuss the clues used to establish the time and place of the story. The use of horses and

surreys and the many chores of an old-fashioned family farm are indications of earlier times. The allusion to Chief Justice Taney, footnoted on p. 132, is the most definite indication of the time period, the early 1860s. The hired man, Enoch, who reveres all learning, likes to quote

Emerson, who lived in that era as well.

Since many students may not be familiar with Quaker customs and beliefs, before assigning the story you may wish to read aloud the excerpt from Jessamyn West's introduction in the *Teacher's Manual*, p. 90.

few geese?' It's a tardy spring," Jess said. "Snow still on the ground and not a word yet from thee about geese."

9 Eliza pulled a chair out from the table and sat. "Jess, why's thee always been so set against geese?"

"I'm not set against geese. It's geese that's set against farming. They can mow down a half-acre of sprouting corn while thee's trying to head them off—and in two minutes they'll 12 level a row of pie plant it's taken two years to get started. No, Eliza, it's the geese that's against me."

"If thee had tight fences . . ." Eliza said.

"Eliza, I got tight fences, but the goose's never been hatched that'll admit fences exist. And an old gander'd just as soon go through a fence as hiss—and if he can't find a hole or crack in a fence he'll lift the latch."

"Jess," said Eliza flatly, "thee don't like geese."

"Well," said Jess, "I wouldn't go so far's to say I didn't like them, but I will say that if there's any meaner, dirtier animal, or one that glories 11 in it more, I don't know it. And a thing I've never been able to understand about thee, Eliza, is what thee sees in the shifty-eyed birds."

"Geese," said Eliza, with a dreaminess unusual to her, "march along so lordly like . . . they're pretty as swans floating down a branch . . . in fall they stretch out their necks and honk to geese passing overhead as if they's wild. My father never had any trouble raising geese and I've heard him say many a time that there's no better food for a brisk morning than a fried goose egg."

Jess knew, with spring his topic, he'd ought to pass over Eliza's father and his fried goose egg but he couldn't help saying, "A fried goose egg always had a kind of bloated look to me, Eliza"—but then he went on fast. "The season's shaping up," he said. "I can see thee's all

primed to say, 'Jess, let's get a setting of goose eggs.'"

Eliza went over to the bean kettle and began to lift out dumplings. "It's a forwarder season than thee thinks, Jess," she said. "I got a setting under a hen now."

Jess looked at his wife. He didn't know what had made him want spring's variety in a human being—nor Eliza's substituting doing 12 for asking. And speaking of it just now, as he had, made opposition kind of ticklish.

"When'd thee set them?" he asked finally.

"Yesterday," said Eliza.

"Where'd thee get the eggs?"

"Overbys'," said Eliza. The Overbys were their neighbors to the south.

"Well, they got enough for a surety," Jess said, "to give a few away."

"The Overbys don't give anything away, as thee knows. I paid for them. With my own money," Eliza added.

"How many?" Jess asked.

"Eight," Eliza said.

13 Jess turned back to his window. The sun had set, leaving a sad green sky and desolate black and white earth. "Five acres of corn gone," he calculated.

"Thee said," Eliza reminded him, "that what thee wanted was a little variety in me. 'Steady as a pump bolt,' were thy words."

"I know I did," Jess admitted glumly. "I talk too much."

"Draw up thy chair," Eliza said placidly, not contradicting him; "here's Enoch and the boys."

Next morning after breakfast Jess and Enoch left the kitchen together. The sun was the warmest the year had yet produced and the 14 farm roofs were steaming; south branch, swollen by melting snow, was running so full the soft lap of its eddies could be heard in the barnyard; a rooster tossed his voice into the

9

**Characterization.** Eliza indicates she is serious about wanting to know Jess's feelings when she stops her work to sit and listen.

10

**Pie plant:** rhubarb, a sweet-sour-tasting plant that grows in stalks and is often used in pies.

11

**Conflict.** Eliza and Jess clearly disagree about the value and beauty of geese.

12

**What does "speaking of it" refer to? Why would it create a problem?** Jess is thinking of his wish for variety. His opposition to Eliza seems to be contradiction to his wish.

13

**Imagery.** An early spring sunset is described. "Sad" and "desolate" create somber tone, suggest that winter still lingers.

14

**Imagery.** Sights and sounds of the barnyard suggest life, activity.



15

**Point of view.** Until now, narration has been limited to Jess's point of view; now narrator reveals Enoch's thoughts.

16

**Simile.** "Eyeing thee like a snake on stilts" is consistent with Jess's earlier description of geese as "shifty-eyed." Underscores his distrust.

17

**What does Jess mean when he says the goose project will be "nipped in the bud"?** Eggs will not hatch, will be stopped before they "flower" into goslings.

18

Enoch admits he is sympathetic toward Eliza's desire to have geese; Jess's sympathies are secondary to his dislike of geese.

19

Enoch, in order to relieve himself of blame, wants Jess to "order" him to do job.

20

Jess and Enoch feel guilt about what they have done as they watch Eliza.

bright air, loud and clear as if aiming to be heard by every fowl in Jennings County.

"Enoch," said Jess to his hired man, "what's thy feeling about geese?"

15 Enoch was instantly equipped, for the most part, with feelings on every subject. Geese was a homelier topic than he'd choose himself to enlarge upon, not one that could be much embellished nor one on which Mr. Emerson,<sup>5</sup> so far's he could recall, had ever expressed an opinion. "In the fall of the year," he said, "long about November or December, there's nothing tastier on the table than roast goose."

"Goose on the table's not what I mean," Jess said. "I was speaking of goose on the hoof. Goose nipping off a stand of corn, Enoch, goose roistering round, honking and hissing

16 so's thee can't hear thyself think, goose eyeing thee like a snake on stilts."

Enoch gazed at his employer for a few seconds. "Mr. Birdwell," he said, "I think that if they's an ornery bird, it's a goose. Ornery and undependable."

"I'm glad we's so like-minded about them," Jess said. "Otherwise, I'd not like to ask thee to do this little job." He pulled a long darning needle from beneath the lapel of his coat.

Enoch eyed it with some mistrust. "I can't say's I've been handy with a needle, Mr. Birdwell."

"Thee'll be handy enough for this," Jess said with hearty conviction. "To come to it, Enoch, Eliza's set eight goose eggs. Next year with any luck she'd have two dozen. And so on. More and more. Feeling the way thee does, Enoch, about geese, it's no more'n fair to give thee a chance to put a stop to this before it goes too far. One little puncture in each egg with this

17 and the goose project's nipped in the bud and Eliza none the wiser."

"I'm mighty awkward with my hands," said

Enoch, "doing fine work. Ticklish job like this I might drop an egg and break it."

"Enoch," said Jess, "thee's not developing a weakness for geese, is thee?"

18 "It ain't the geese," said Enoch frankly, "it's your wife. She's been mighty clever<sup>6</sup> to me and if she's got her heart set on geese, it'd go against the grain to disappoint her. Whyn't you do it, Mr. Birdwell?"

"Same reason," said Jess, "only more of them—and if Eliza ever asks if I tampered with that setting of eggs I figure on being able to say no." Jess held the needle nearer Enoch, who looked at it but still made no motion to take it.

"Likely no need to do a thing," Enoch said. "Two to one those eggs'll never hatch anyways. Overbys're such a fox-eared tribe they more'n likely sold her bad eggs to begin with."

"Thee's knowed about this," Jess asked, "all along?"

"Yes," Enoch said.

"Here's the needle," Jess said.

19 "You look at this," Enoch inquired, "not so much as a favor asked as a part of the day's work with orders from you?"

"Yes," Jess said, "that's about the way I look at it."

Enoch took the needle, held it somewhat gingerly, and with the sun glinting across its length walked slowly toward the chicken house.

It takes thirty days for a goose egg to hatch, and the time, with spring work to be done, went fast. The hen Eliza had picked was a good one and kept her mind strictly on her setting.

20 Eliza kept her mind on the hen, and Jess and Enoch found their minds oftener than they liked on Eliza and her hoped-for geese.

At breakfast on the day the geese were due to break their shells Jess said, "If I's thee, Eliza,

5. **Mr. Emerson:** Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist and poet (1803–1882).

6. **clever:** kind (a local use of the word).

21 I wouldn't bank too much on them geese. I heard Enoch say a while back he wouldn't be surprised if not an egg hatched. Thought the eggs were likely no good."

Enoch was busy pouring coffee into a saucer, then busy cooling it, but Eliza waited until he was through. "Did thee say that, Enoch?"

Enoch looked at Jess. "Yes," he said, "I kind of recollect something of the sort."

"What made thee think so, Enoch?"

"Why," said Jess, for Enoch was busy with his coffee again, "it was the Overbys. Enoch's got a

22 feeling they's kind of unreliable. Fox-eared, I think thee said, Enoch, didn't thee?"

23 Enoch's work took him outside almost at once and Jess himself said, "If thee'll just give me a little packet of food, Eliza, I won't trouble thee for anything at noon. I'm going to be over'n the south forty and it'll save time coming and going."

Eliza was surprised, for Jess'd usually come twice as far for a hot dinner at midday, but she made him fried-ham sandwiches and put them and some cold apple turnovers in a bag.

"It's a pity thee has to miss thy dinner," she told him, but Jess only said, "Press of work, press of work," and hurriedly departed.

Jess came home that evening through the spring twilight, somewhat late, and found a number of things to do at the barn before he went up to the house. When he entered the kitchen nothing seemed amiss—lamps ruddy, table set, stove humming, and beside the stove a small box over which Eliza was bending. Jess stopped to look—and listen; from inside the box was coming a kind of birdlike peeping, soft and not unpleasant. Reluctantly he walked to Eliza's side. There, eating minced boiled egg, and between bites lifting its beak to Eliza, it seemed, and making those chirping sounds

24 he'd heard, was a gray-gold gosling.

Eliza looked up pleasantly. "Enoch was

right," she said. "The eggs were bad. Only one hatched. I plan to call it Samantha," she told Jess. "It's a name I've always been partial to."

"Samantha," said Jess without any enthusiasm whatever for either name or gosling. "How's thee know it's a she?"

"I don't," said Eliza, "but if it's a gander it's a name easily changed to Sam."

Enoch came in just then with a load of wood for the kitchen woodbox. "Enoch," asked Jess, "has thee seen Samantha—or Sam?"

Enoch mumbled but Jess understood him to say he had.

25 "It was my understanding, Enoch, that thy opinion was that all those eggs were bad."

"Well, Mr. Birdwell," said Enoch, "a man could make a mistake. He could count wrong."

"A man ought to be able to count to eight without going astray," said Jess.

Eliza was paying no attention to either of them; she was making little tweeting sounds herself, bending over the chirping gosling. "Does thee know," she asked Jess, "that this is the first pet I ever had in my life?"

"Thee's got Ebony," Jess said.

"I don't mean a caged pet," Eliza said, "but one to walk beside thee. I'm reconciled the others didn't hatch. With eight I'd've had to raise geese for the table. With one only I can make Samantha a pure pet."

A pure pet was what she made of her: Samantha ate what the family ate, with the exception of articles which Eliza thought might be indigestible and would risk on humans but not on her goose. Cake, pie, corn on the cob, there was nothing too good for Samantha. From a big-footed, gold-downed gosling she swelled, almost at once, like a slack sail which gets a sudden breeze, into a full-rounded convexity.

26 "Emphasis on the vexity," Jess said when he

21

*Why does Jess say the eggs were "likely no good"? He tries to prepare Eliza for what he believes will happen.*

22

*"Fox-eared" implies that the Overbys are deceptive and cunning enough to outwit or cheat Eliza.*

23

*Neither man wants to be around Eliza on the day her geese are expected to hatch.*

24

*Mixture of golden yellow and black down gives gosling "gray-gold" color.*

25

*Irony. Conversation is intended to seem to reflect on Overbys but actually refers to Enoch's puncturing eggs.*

26

*Pun. Jess coins word vexity to mean "irritation or annoyance" from convexity, meaning "having rounded outward shape."*

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The goose is a large water-fowl with a long neck and a short bill. Male geese (called “ganders”) are usually larger than females but are otherwise similar in coloration. Geese mate for life—a rare occurrence in the animal world. Geese live for ten to fifteen years in the wild and for up to thirty years in captivity. Geese frequently migrate great distances in the winter, flying in a characteristic V-formation.

### Relating Expression Skills

“The Pacing Goose” mentions many country processes and practices. Students might learn more about tree grafting or apple farming or raising horses, and then prepare oral reports to explain them to the rest of the class.



27

**Characterization.** Jess's opinion of goose suggests she is unique, stubborn, lively, fearless, and greedy. Important to establish Samantha's personality so reader will be concerned about her fate.

28

**Diction.** Description of Samantha's neck as “snakelike” recalls Jess's other comparisons of goose to snake. Reflects fact that narrator is telling story from Jess's perspective at present.

29

**Allusion.** In Roman mythology, Juno was queen of the heavens, wife of Jupiter.

27 thought of this. Samantha was everything he'd disliked in the general run of geese, with added traits peculiar to herself, which vexed him. Because she was fed at the doorstep, she was always underfoot. No shout, however loud, would move her before she's ready to move. If she's talked to too strong she'd flail you with her wings and pinch the calf of your leg until for some days it would look to be mortifying. She'd take food out of children's 29 hands, and the pansies Jess had planted in a circle at the base of the Juneberry tree she sheared so close that there was not a naked stem left to show for all his work. And when not being crossed in any way, Jess simply looking at her and meditating, trying to fathom Samantha's fascination for Eliza, the goose 28 would suddenly extend her snakelike neck,

and almost touching Jess, hiss with such a hint of icy disapprobation that Jess would involuntarily recoil.

But she was Eliza's pure pet, no two ways about that, and would lift her head for Eliza to scratch, and walk beside her with the lordly roll of the known elect.<sup>7</sup>

“There was some goddess,” Enoch remembered, “who always had a big bird with her.” Jess supposed Enoch was thinking of Juno and her peacock, but the reference didn't convince him that a goose was a suitable companion for any goddess—let alone Eliza, and he couldn't honestly feel much regret when one evening toward the end of November Eliza told him

7. **elect:** according to Calvinist doctrine, those who have been selected by God for salvation.



Samantha was missing. “She’ll turn up,” Jess said. “That bird’s too ornery to die young.”

Eliza said nothing, but next evening she proved Jess was right. “Samantha’s over at Overbys,” she said.

“Well, did thee fetch her home?” Jess asked.

“No,” said Eliza with righteous indignation, “they wouldn’t let me. They said they had forty geese—and forty’s what they got now, and they don’t think Samantha’s there. They provoked me so, Jess, I told them they’d sold me seven bad eggs and now they try to take the eighth away from me.”

Jess felt a little abashed at this, but he asked, “How can thee be so sure Samantha’s there? She might’ve been carried off by a varmint.”

Eliza was scornful. “Thee forgets I hand-raised Samantha from a gosling. I’d know her among four hundred—let alone forty.”

“Whyn’t thee buy her back then,” Jess asked, “if that’s the only way?”

31 “After what I said about their eggs,” Eliza answered sadly, “the Overbys say they don’t want any more dealings with me.”

Eliza mourned so for the lost Samantha that first Enoch and then Jess went over to the Overbys’ but no one there would admit the presence of a visiting goose—forty they had, and forty you could see by counting was what they had now. Short of force there didn’t seem any way of getting Samantha home again.

When Eliza heard the Overbys were going to sell geese for Christmas eating she was frantic. “Jess,” she said, “I just can’t bear to think of Samantha, plucked naked and resting on a table waiting to be carved. She used to sing as sweet as any bird when she was little, and she’d walk by my side taking the air. She’s the only goose I ever heard of,” Eliza remembered mournfully, “who’d drink tea.”

In Jess’s opinion a goose’d eat anything at either end of the scale, but he didn’t suppose this

was a suitable time to mention it to Eliza. “Eliza,” he said, “short of me and Enoch’s going over there and using force on old man Overby—or sneaking over at night and breaking into their chicken pen, I don’t know how in the world we’re going to get Samantha back for thee.”

“We could sue,” said Eliza.

“Thee mean go to law?” Jess asked, astounded. Quakers stayed out of courts, believing in amicable settlements without recourse to law.

32 “Yes,” said Eliza. “I’d do it for Samantha. I’d think it my duty. Going to law’d be a misery for us . . . but not so lasting a misery as being roasted would be for Samantha.”

Jess couldn’t deny this, but he said, “I’d have to think it over. I’ve never been to law yet in my life and suing for a gone goose don’t seem to me a very likely place to start.”

Next morning Eliza served a good but silent breakfast, not sitting herself to eat with the rest of her family.

“Thee feeling dauncy,<sup>8</sup> Eliza?” Jess asked.

“I just can’t eat,” she said, “for thinking of Samantha.”

Labe and Mattie had tears in their eyes. Little Jess was mournfully bellowing. Enoch looked mighty glum. Jess felt ashamed to be swallowing victuals in the midst of so much sorrow. Eliza stood at the end of the stove where the gosling’s box had rested for the first few weeks of its life, looking down, as if remembering how it had sung and lifted its beak to her.

Jess couldn’t stand it. “Eliza,” he said, “if thee wants to go through with it I’ll go to Vernon and fee a lawyer for thee. Thee’ll have to go to court, be on the witness stand—and even then I misdoubt thee’ll ever get thy goose back. 35 Does thee still want me to do it?”

8. dauncy: ill.

30

**Conflict.** Eliza accuses the innocent Overbys of selling her bad eggs, no doubt making the situation worse.

31

**Conflict.** False accusation angers Overbys so much they refuse Eliza’s money and want no further dealings with her.

32

**Characterization.** Eliza’s love for Samantha is deep; she is willing to put Samantha’s welfare above the customs of her sect.

33

**Alliteration.** Jess demonstrates his creative use of language with “gone goose.”

34

“Fee a lawyer”: dialect for “hire, or engage, a lawyer.”

35

**Why would Jess be willing to “go to the law” for Samantha?** Even though Jess was not fond of her, he loves Eliza enough to make sacrifices for her happiness.

36

**Imagery.** Details of countryside as they ride into town ("brilliant sunlight," "crisp air") create bright, happy tone.

37

**Characterization.** Jess warns Eliza that in a court of law, factual information is needed; Eliza cannot depend on sympathy from the court. His warning shows his concern for Eliza.

38

Jess tries to prepare Eliza for the worst—to make the situation seem hopeless.

39

Jess still doesn't like Samantha or want her around.

40

Jess, sure that Eliza does not understand matters of law, is certain Eliza will be disappointed.

41

Jess surveys the crowd and decides that there will be little sympathy for Eliza.

42

Jess's thoughts about judge are less than sympathetic—from physical description as "jugged" (ears extend outward like handles on a jug) to assessment of his ignorance of country matters.

Eliza came to the table and stood with her hand on Jess's shoulder. "Yes, Jess," she said, "I want thee to do it."

Jess went to Vernon, fee'd a lawyer, had a restraining order put on the Overbys so they couldn't sell or kill the goose Eliza said was Samantha, and awaited with misgivings the day of the trial. It came in mid-December.

Eliza, Jess and Enoch rode to the trial through  
36 a fall of light, fresh snow. Brilliant sunlight, crisp air, glittering snow, and Rome's<sup>9</sup> spirited stepping made the occasion, in spite of its purpose, seem festive. Eliza made it seem festive. Jess, who did not forget its purpose, regarded her with some wonder. He couldn't say what it was about her—dress and bonnet appeared to be simply her First Day<sup>10</sup> best—but she had a holiday air.

37 He considered it his duty to warn her. "Eliza," he said, "thee understands thee's not going to Meeting;<sup>11</sup> They're not going to sit silent while thee tells them how much thee loves Samantha and how she sang when young and drank tea. Old man Overby'll have his say and he's got a lawyer hired for no other purpose than to trip thee up."

Eliza was unimpressed. "What's our lawyer fee'd for, Jess?" she asked.

Jess took another tack. "Eliza," he told her,  
38 "I don't figger thee's got a chance in a thousand to get Samantha back."

"This is a court of justice, isn't it?" Eliza asked.

"Yes," Jess said.

"Then there's no need for thee to fash<sup>12</sup> thyself, Jess Birdwell. I'll get Samantha back."

Not getting Samantha back wasn't what  
39 fashed Jess—he reckoned he could bear up

under that mighty well. What fashed him was the whole shooting match. . . . In some few cases, matters of life and death, going to court might be necessary, and he could imagine such. But a suit over a goose named Samantha wasn't one of them. And poor Eliza. Law to her  
40 was all Greek and turkey tracks . . . and here she was bound for court as chipper as if she was Chief Justice Taney<sup>13</sup> himself. Jess sighed and shook his head. Getting shut of Samantha would be no hardship for him, but he was downcast for Eliza's sake and the way she'd have to turn homeward empty-handed.

In the courtroom hard, clear light reflected upward from the snow fell onto what Jess  
41 thought were hard faces: courthouse hangers-on; farmers whose slackening work made the diversion of a trial an inviting possibility; lovers of oddity who figured a tilt between a Quaker female, preacher to boot, and an old sinner like Milt Overby over the ownership of a goose ought to produce some enlivening quirks. They stared at Eliza, exchanged salutes with Milt Overby and inspected Samantha, who in her crate awaited the court's decision.

The two lawyers Jess considered to be on a par. Nothing fancy, either one . . . old roadsters both, gone gray in service and with a knowledge of their business. The circuit judge  
42 was something else, unaccountably young, jugged and dressed more sprightly than a groom for his own wedding. A city whipper-snapper, born and trained north of the Mississinewa,<sup>14</sup> and now, in Jess's opinion, setting a squeamish foot in backwoods provinces, and irked to find himself trying so trifling a case. Didn't know a goose from a guinea hen, like as not, and would consider tossing a coin a more suitable manner of settling such a

9. **Rome:** Rome Beauty, the Birdwells' carriage horse.

10. **First Day:** Quaker name for Sunday.

11. **Meeting:** Quaker church meeting.

12. **fash:** worry.

13. **Taney** (tā'nē): Roger B. Taney, a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1836–1864).

14. **Mississinewa** (mīs-is-sīn'f-wā): a small river flowing into the Wabash River in Indiana.

matter—just as near right in the end—and his valuable time saved.

43 Eliza, Jess saw, was of no such opinion. She, too, was scanning the young judge, and Jess, who knew her, saw from the look on her face that she was taken by him. A neat, thin, pious boy—far from home—he looked, no doubt, to her; a young man who could do with better cooking and more regular eating.

The young man rapped the court to order. Spitting and shuffling slackened and in a high, precise voice he read, “Birdwell versus Overby. Charge, petty larceny. Appropriation and willful withholding of goose named Samantha.” The name Samantha seemed to somewhat choke him, but he got it out.

“Ready for Birdwell,” said Mr. Abel Samp, Eliza’s lawyer.

“Ready for Overby,” said the defendant’s lawyer.

Eliza was the first witness on the stand. Jess sometimes forgot what a good-looking woman Eliza was, but the interest shown on lifted faces all about him refreshed his memory.

“Swear the plaintiff in,” the judge said.

Eliza, in her sweet voice, spoke directly to the judge. “I don’t swear,” she said.

The judge explained that profanity was not asked for. “I understood,” said Eliza, “that thee wasn’t asking for profanity. No one would think that of thee. But we Quakers do not take 44 oaths in court. We affirm.”

“Permit Mrs. Birdwell to affirm,” said the judge. Eliza affirmed.

Mr. Samp then proceeded to question Eliza as to Samantha’s birth and habits.

“Judge,” Eliza began.

“Address the judge,” Mr. Samp said, “as Your Honor.”

“We Quakers,” Eliza told the judge, gently, 45 “do not make use of such titles. What is thy 46 name? I think thee’ll go far in our state and thy name’s one I’d like to know.”

The judge appeared somewhat distracted, undecided as to whether to make the tone of the court brisk and legal (if possible) or to follow Eliza’s lead of urbane sociability.

“Pomeroy,” he said and made a slight bow in Eliza’s direction.

Eliza returned the bow, deeper and with 47 more grace. “Friend Pomeroy,” she said, “it is indeed a pleasure to know thee.”

Samantha’s story as Eliza told it to Friend Pomeroy was surprisingly terse. Affecting, and losing nothing by Eliza’s telling, but to the point.

“Mrs. Birdwell,” said Samp, “how long have you had an acquaintanceship with geese and their habits?”

“Since I was a child,” Eliza said. “My father was a great fancier of geese.”

“And you think you could identify this goose Samantha, which you admit in looks was similar to the defendant’s?”

“I could,” Eliza said with much authority.

Mr. Samp, to Jess’s surprise, left the matter there. “Take the witness,” he said to Overby’s lawyer—but the counsel for the defendant was in no hurry to cross-examine Eliza. Instead he put his client on the stand.

“Farewell, Samantha,” Jess said to Enoch.

“You relieved?” Enoch asked.

48 “Putting Eliza first,” Jess said, “as I do, no.”

Milt Overby, whose natural truculence was 49 somewhat stimulated by a nip he’d had to offset snappy weather, bellowed his way through his testimony. At one juncture he set the judge aright when he asked some elementary questions concerning the habits and configurations of geese. “Where in tarnation you from?” he snorted. “What they mean sending us judges down here who don’t know Toulouse from Wyandotte,<sup>15</sup> or goose from gander?”

The young judge used voice and gavel to

15. **Toulouse** (tōō-lōōz’) . . . **Wyandotte** (wī’an-dōt): breeds of fowl.

#### 43

**Characterization.** Jess and Eliza do not see eye-to-eye on many matters, yet devotion to each other is obvious. Can understand one another’s thoughts.

#### 44

**Why would Eliza refuse to swear?** As Quaker, she is following Biblical injunction not to swear by anything (Matthew 26:63, Matthew 5: 34–36, James 5:12).

#### 45

**Why does Eliza refuse to use titles?** Quakers believe all people are equal in eyes of God; believe it is wrong to make distinctions among people because of rank or social position.

#### 46

Eliza’s compliment is sincere; she has more faith in young judge than Jess does.

#### 47

“Friend” is title used by Quakers. Reflects nature of religion; warm, respectful, without class or other social distinctions.

#### 48

**What is the significance of Jess’s response?** Because of his love for Eliza, he is not happy when he believes goose will be lost.

#### 49

“Nip” refers to a drink of liquor, which makes him even more quarrelsome than usual.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Quakers emphasize education, independent thinking, and plainness in dress and speech. Because they value education highly, they have founded universities such as Bryn Mawr, Cornell, and Swarthmore. In 1947, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the American and British Friends Service Committees for work with victims of war and famine. Quakers still disdain clergy and rigid ecclesiastical forms. Despite numbering only about 200,000 today, Quakers from all over the world maintain influential positions in all walks of life.



Detail from *Quaker Meeting* by anonymous nineteenth-century artist.  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bequest of Maxim Karolik

50

**Why is the lawyer reluctant to cross-examine Eliza?** She is good witness, undermines clients' case.

51

**Point of view.** Omniscient narrator reveals that judge is taken by Eliza's straightforward and informal manner.

52

Eliza's case is strengthened by this testimony. Unlikely that judge can do other than award Samantha to Eliza.

quiet the guffawing which filled the courtroom and the trial proceeded. A number of witnesses for both sides were brought to the stand and while it was shown that Overbys had maybe eaten a goose or two and neglected out of pure fondness for the creatures to count them as among the departed, still nobody had been able to positively identify Samantha.

50 Mr. Overby's lawyer seemed somewhat loath 52 to cross-examine Eliza, but he put her on the stand. She'd said she knew geese and her testimony had been direct and positive. "Mrs. Birdwell," he said, "how can you be so sure your goose was with my client's geese?"

Eliza's black eyes rested confidently upon the judge. "Friend Pomeroy," she said, "I raised Samantha from a gosling."

Jess sighed. "Here it comes," he said, "how

that goose could sing and drink tea."

Eliza continued, "And there's one thing about her that always set her apart from every other goose."

"Yes, Mrs. Birdwell," said Judge Pomeroy, who was inclined to forget, with Eliza on the stand, that he was in a courtroom.

"Samantha," said Eliza, with much earnestness, "from the day she was born had a gait unlike any other goose I ever saw and one that set her apart from all her Overby connections. I picked her out at once when I went over there, because of it. Thee couldn't've missed it, Friend Pomeroy."

"Yes, Mrs. Birdwell," said the judge with interest in his voice.

"Samantha," said Eliza, "was a born pacer. Thee knows what a pacer is?"

"Certainly," said Judge Pomeroy. "A pacer," he repeated with no surprise—and with obvious pleasure that Eliza'd hit upon so clear and differentiating an aspect of her goose and one that made identification possible.

A titter was mounting through the courtroom—Judge Pomeroy lifted his head. He had no desire to be further instructed as to the history, habits, and breeds of geese, and he liked to see a trial settled by some such little and too often overlooked subtlety. Judge Pomeroy brought down his gavel. "The court awards decision in favor of the plaintiff. Case dismissed." While the silence that followed on his words still prevailed Judge Pomeroy stepped briskly and with obvious pleasure out through the rear door.

Jess was also brisk about departure. No use lingering until Friend Pomeroy had been more thoroughly informed as to gaits in general and geese in particular. Midafternoon's a quiet time in any season. In winter with snow on the ground, no leaves to rustle and bare limbs rigid as rock against a cloudless sky, the hush is deepest of all. Nothing broke that hush in the surrey,<sup>16</sup> except the squeak of leather and snow, the muffled footfalls of Rome Beauty. Jess and Eliza, on the front seat, rode without speaking. Enoch, in the back, seemed to meditate. Even Samantha in her crate at Enoch's feet was silent.

Maple Grove Nursery was in sight before Jess spoke. "Eliza," he said, "would thee mind telling me—did thee ever see a trotting goose?"

Enoch ceased to meditate and listened. He had been wondering about this himself.

"Certainly not," said Eliza. "Thee knows as well as I, Jess Birdwell, an animal can't trot without hind feet and forefeet."

"So far, Eliza," Jess said, "we see eye to eye. Now maybe thee'd tell me—did thee ever see a goose that didn't pace?"

Eliza was truly amazed, it seemed. "Why, Jess," she said, "an ordinary goose just walks—but Samantha paces."

Jess was silent for a spell. "What'd thee say the difference is?"

"It's the swing, Jess Birdwell," said Eliza, "same as in a horse that nature's formed for a pacer . . . it's the natural bent, the way the spirit leads the beast to set his feet down. Samantha's a natural pacer."

That seemed as far as they'd likely get on the subject and Jess joined Enoch in meditation. In the barnyard, before she went up to the house, Eliza said, like an old hand at the business, "Attending court whettens the appetite. It's a little early but I thought if thee'd relish it"—and she looked at Jess and Enoch, never sparing a glance for Samantha, as if her menfolk's welfare was her sole concern—"I'd stir us up a bite to eat. Hot tea and fresh sweetcakes, say. Might fry a little sausage and open some cherry preserves. If thee'd relish it," she repeated.

Jess wasn't taken in, but he'd relish it, and so would Enoch, and they both said so. They hustled with the unhitching so they could uncrate Samantha and note her progress with eyes newly instructed as to what made a pacer. Jess dumped her in the snow, and Enoch tapped her with his hat. Samantha made for the back door.

"By sugar," said Jess, "Eliza's right. She paces." Samantha had the smooth roll of a racker<sup>17</sup>—there were no two ways about it. At heart she was a pacer, and what two legs could do in that line, Samantha accomplished.

"With four legs," Enoch said, "you could enter her in any county fair—rack on," he

53

**Climax.** Judge, already sympathetic to Eliza, is evidently glad to have any grounds on which to settle case.

54

Jess has no faith in accuracy of Eliza's claim that Samantha paces, but he readily accepts verdict.

55

Jess's questions to Eliza reveal his skepticism about her description of Samantha as a "pacer."

56

Jess falls silent, keeps thoughts to himself. Evidently, he still doubts Eliza's ability to identify goose.

57

**Why doesn't Eliza glance at Samantha?** Has no doubt this is her goose.

58

Fact that goose "made for the back door" is confirmation she is indeed Eliza's Samantha.

16. **surrey:** a light carriage.

17. **racker:** a horse that paces.

**Characterization.** Jess has changed, learned from experience. He will no longer underestimate Eliza or wish her to change. He is a dynamic character.

### READING CHECK

1. Enoch pricks all but one with darning needle (pp. 128–129).
2. She accuses them of selling her bad eggs (p. 131).
3. To save Samantha's life (p. 131).
4. Eliza will lose lawsuit (p. 132).
5. By her walk (p. 134).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Thinks that no two springs are same, but people stay same and do same things. 1b. Is accustomed to Eliza longing for geese, but this time she has bought eggs without telling him.
- 2a. Jess thinks of himself as poetic and resourceful; thinks of geese as destructive to plants he likes to grow. Eliza is capable, serene, steady, and has inner resources of strength, humor, and insight; thinks of geese as pretty, lordly creatures. 2b. Jess and Eliza freely express needs and opinions to each other and seek each other's approval. Eliza provides domestic comforts and pleasures for Jess; Jess shows love when he goes to court despite misgivings.

cried with enthusiasm. As they followed Samantha to the house, Enoch, for whom any event existed chiefly in its after aspects as a cud for rumination, asked, "How you feel in respect of court trials, now, Mr. Birdwell?"

- 59 "I'm still against them," Jess said, "though they's three things this trial's taught me I might never otherwise have learned. Two's about women."

Enoch revered all knowledge and he had a notion that information on this subject might have a more than transcendental<sup>18</sup> value. "What's the two things you learned about women, Mr. Birdwell?"

"Well, Enoch, I learned first, dependability's woman's greatest virtue. Steady as a pump bolt, day in, day out. When thee finds a woman like that, Enoch, don't try to change her. Not even in spring."

"No, sir," said Enoch, "I won't."

"Second, when it's a case of woman and the law—thee don't need to waste any worry on the woman."

"No, sir," said Enoch again.

When they reached the back steps, Enoch asked, "I understood you to say you'd learned three things, Mr. Birdwell. What's the third about?"

"Hired men," said Jess.

Enoch was taken aback, but he'd asked for it.

"Yes, Mr. Birdwell," he said.

"Never hire one," Jess told him, "till thee finds out first if he can count to eight. Save thyself a lot of trouble that way, Enoch."

"How's I to know the eighth'd turn out to be Samantha?" Enoch asked.

Samantha herself, who was waiting at the doorstep for an expected tidbit, reached out and, unhampered by either boots or work pants, nipped Enoch firmly through his thin Sunday best.

18. **transcendental**: here, abstract.

"Thee say something, Enoch?" Jess asked.

Enoch had but he didn't repeat it. Instead he said, "Pacer or no pacer, that's Samantha," and the two of them stepped out of the snow into the warm kitchen, scented with baking sweetcakes and frying sausage.

## Reading Check

1. Why does only one of the goose eggs hatch?
2. Why do the Overbys refuse to sell Samantha back to Eliza?
3. Why does Eliza decide to bring suit against the Overbys?
4. What does Jess think will be the result of the trial?
5. How does Eliza claim she can identify Samantha?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. When the story opens, Jess is feeling discontented. **a.** How is his discontent linked to the season of the year? **b.** Why does Eliza's announcement about the goose eggs come as a surprise?
- 2a. Explain how the conflict between Jess and Eliza over Samantha is a result of their different personalities. **b.** Despite the conflict Jess and Eliza continue to live in harmony. What evidence is there, in their speech and action, of mutual love and esteem?
3. "The Pacing Goose" appears in a collection of stories about the Birdwells called *The Friendly Persuasion*. The title refers to Jess and Eliza being Quakers, since Quakers prefer to be known as the Society of Friends. Quakers believe in the importance of acting in accord-



ance with the dictates of individual conscience. Why is Eliza's going to court a particularly significant act?

4. Jess is clearly surprised by the events in the courtroom. **a.** What does he think will happen? **b.** How does he underestimate Eliza's character?

5a. Jess claims to have learned three things from the trial. What are they? **b.** In what way has his admiration for his wife deepened?

## Literary Elements

### The Omniscient Point of View

A story is sometimes told from the point of view of an outside observer who has complete knowledge of all the characters and who can therefore reveal not only their actions, their words, and their physical characteristics, but also their unspoken thoughts and feelings. Such an observer is *omniscient*, or "all-knowing," and the story is said to be told from the **omniscient point of view**.

This point of view allows readers to explore the internal as well as the external lives of characters. In "The Pacing Goose," for example, the conflict between Jess and Eliza is often expressed through thoughts:

Spring made Jess discontented with the human race—and with women, if anything, more than men. It looked as if spring put them all in the shade: the season so resourceful and they each year meeting it with nothing changed from last year . . . (page 125).

Ah, well, Jess thought, no use at this late date to tell her what's the difference (page 126).

Eliza kept her mind on the hen, and Jess and Enoch found their minds oftener than they liked on Eliza and her hoped-for geese (page 128).

Samantha was everything he'd disliked in the general run of geese, with added traits peculiar to herself, which vexed him (page 130).

► Before students begin this writing assignment you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

### 1 Find passages where the author makes known the thoughts and feelings of Enoch, Overby, and Judge Pomeroy.

This technique gives Jessamyn West considerable freedom. It allows her to tell more than any individual character in the story could tell about the action.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Understanding Dialect

Dialects within a single language vary greatly in matters of pronunciation, sentence structure, and vocabulary, and writers make use of these differences in the realistic portrayal of character. Dave's father in "Split Cherry Tree" (page 76) speaks a Kentucky dialect.

"The Pacing Goose" is set on a farm in Indiana during the Civil War, and Jessamyn West has reproduced characteristics of Quaker and regional speech. Look up each of the italicized words in the following list and tell what it means:

*Thee* speaking to me, Jess?

She might've been carried off by a *varmint*.

Nothing fancy, either one . . . old *roadsters* both . . .

Where in *tarnation* you from?

Attending court *whettens* the appetite.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Discussing a Change in Attitude

At the opening of the story, Jess is discontented because he wants to see spring's variety in human beings. He complains that Eliza is "as steady as a pump bolt." At the end of the story, he tells Enoch that "dependability's woman's greatest virtue." In a paragraph tell what has happened to change his attitude.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to imagine "The Pacing Goose" retold from the **point of view** of a single character and decide what would be lost. Then ask them to explain the advantages of the omniscient point of view.

3. "Quakers stayed out of courts, believing in amicable settlements. . . ." When no other settlement seems possible, individual conscience apparently outweighs restriction against going to court.

4a. Eliza would naively try to tell how much she loves Samantha; Overby and lawyer would quickly defeat her. 4b. Underestimates effect of her goodness, grace, insight, and her success in court.

5a. Dependability is woman's greatest virtue; a woman will come out all right in matters of law; farmer should not employ hired man who cannot count to eight. 5b. Although he does not say so, Jess is proud of his wife's triumph; realizes that she is right about Samantha and that she is woman of many talents.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Passages include: "The judge appeared . . . sociability" (p. 133); "Milt Overby, whose . . . testimony" (p. 133); "Enoch revered . . . Mr. Birdwell?" (p. 136).

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Thee* means "you."

*Varmint* means "an undesirable animal."

*Roadsters* are men who have traveled the roads and are experienced.

*Tarnation* is euphemistic way of saying *hell*.

*Whettens* means "sharpens."

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Ask students to apply to the story the old saying, "Be careful what you ask for; you just might get it." After students have considered what Jess asked for and what he got, they will be able to trace the steps that led him to change his attitude toward his wife.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

For further glimpses into the lives of the Birdwell family, students may enjoy reading *The Friendly Persuasion* and *Except for Me and Thee*. Students may also want to read other works by Jessamyn West, such as *The Witch Diggers* and

*Cress Delahanty*.

The 1956 movie version of *The Friendly Persuasion* is available on videocassette. This could be an excellent film for the entire class to see. If the film is viewed outside of class, have students who see it give oral reports on whether, in their

opinion, the film's tone is faithful to West's writing.

Have students write essays or short stories based on real-life incidents concerning unusual or willful pets that caused problems.

## DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

Before students write their own description of a season, they should note again the rich sensory imagery in Jessamyn West's first paragraph. Have them cite each mention of touch, smell, sound, sight, and taste in these few lines. They might list in their journals sensory experiences they associate with the season they have chosen and then tell about them in a prose paragraph—or even a free verse poem.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jessamyn West also wrote *A Matter of Time*, a semi-autobiographical work describing the experiences of a woman attending her dying sister. *The Life I Really Lived* tells the story of a Midwestern woman who moves to California.

## Descriptive Writing

### ► Describing a Season

At the opening of the story, Jess is sitting in the kitchen, musing about the coming of spring. To him, spring is a “various season,” a season filled with variety. What details does he associate with spring? Consider what details he might have used to describe summer, winter, or fall. In a paragraph of your own, describe one of these other seasons, emphasizing its variety.

## About the Author

### Jessamyn West (1907–1984)



Jessamyn West was born in Indiana but grew up in California. She studied at Whittier College, where she married a classmate. She continued her studies in England, then returned to the

United States to attend the University of California. When she was confined to bed with tuberculosis, she began to write. Her first book was *The Friendly Persuasion*, a group of stories about a Quaker family (much like her mother's people), who lived on a farm in Indiana during the Civil War. The book was praised for its humor, its richness of language, and its fine sense of daily life. Some years later, she published another collection of stories about the Birdwell family, *Except for Me and Thee: a Companion to The Friendly Persuasion*. In addition, West wrote *Cress Delahanty*, a collection of stories about a teenage girl, and two other short-story collections: *Love, Death, and the Ladies' Drill Team* and *Crimson Ramblers of the World, Farewell*. She produced several novels, including *The Witch Diggers* and *The Massacre at Fall Creek*; and two autobiographical works: *Hide and Seek: A Continuing Journey* and *To See the Dream*, an account of her trip to Los Angeles to work on the script for the film version of *The Friendly Persuasion*.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze elements of setting in the story, including the use of setting to create mood and the symbolic meaning of the setting. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 145 will give students practice in distinguishing between denotative and connotative meanings.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to imagine that they are fleeing their homes because of an impending calamity that threatens to destroy civilization. Have them list five items they would take with them.

## SETTING

# The Portable Phonograph

WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK

*Many stories have been written about the collapse of civilization as we know it, but few have ever achieved the impact of this story. How does the author prepare you for the final, devastating scene?*

1 The red sunset, with narrow, black cloud strips like threats across it, lay on the curved horizon of the prairie. The air was still and cold, and in it settled the mute darkness and greater cold of night. High in the air there was wind, for through the veil of the dusk the clouds could be seen gliding rapidly south and changing shapes. A sensation of torment, of two-sided, unpredictable nature, arose from the stillness of the earth air beneath the violence of the upper air. Out of the sunset, through the dead, matted grass and isolated weed stalks of the prairie, crept the narrow and deeply rutted remains of a road. In the road, in places, there were crusts of shallow, brittle ice. There were  
2 little islands of an old oiled pavement in the road too, but most of it was mud, now frozen

rigid. The frozen mud still bore the toothed  
3 impress of great tanks, and a wanderer on the neighboring undulations might have stumbled, in this light, into large, partially filled-in and weed-grown cavities, their banks channeled and beginning to spread into badlands.<sup>1</sup> These pits were such as might have been made by falling meteors, but they were not. They  
4 were the scars of gigantic bombs, their rawness already made a little natural by rain, seed and time. Along the road there were rakish remnants of fence. There was also, just visible, one portion of tangled and multiple barbed wire still erect, behind which was a shelving ditch with small caves, now very quiet and empty, at

1. **badlands:** sections of barren land where erosion has cut the soil into ridges and peaks.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the devastating impact of this story. You may wish to explain that this impact is largely achieved through the author's skillful use of description and setting. Encourage students to note, as they read, descriptive elements that they feel help achieve the story's effect.

## The Portable Phonograph

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of the story and its setting.

1  
**Atmosphere.** Words such as "threats," "darkness," "torment," "unpredictable," and "violence" are used to create an ominous mood.

2  
**Setting.** First clue to time setting is in "old oiled pavement," which places story at least in this century.

3  
**What does mention of "great tanks" suggest about time period of story?** Modern warfare has been involved in creating scene.

4  
**Setting.** "Scars of gigantic bombs" have begun to heal, indicating story takes place some time after a devastating war.



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The world's civilizations have been destroyed by war. The winter landscape has been scarred by bombs and tanks. Surviving humans live in crude dugouts heated by peat and remnants of wood. Only one man, Doctor Jenkins, has managed to

save some classic books, a portable phonograph, and a dozen records. Now he must be the guardian of the old civilization.

## PRESENTATION

Find out how this story affects your students. Does it make them thoughtful, uneasy, or frightened? Do they find it a completely depressing scenario or do they find any optimism in the story? Use the For Study and Discussion ques-

5

Here nature must struggle against the destructive forces of man, a reversal of common theme of man against forces of nature.

6

**Imagery.** "Protracted howl" of wolf creates eerie sound image, made more intense by fact that it interrupts "vacancy" left after geese are gone.

7

**Description.** Cell recalls World War I trenches, World War II foxholes, or even prehistoric cave dwellings.

8

**Peat:** Decayed plant material often formed in swamps; highly combustible, it may be used for fuel.

9

**Conflict.** Here conflict is between man and harsh winter cold, against which there is little protection.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The modern-day record player evolved from the early phonograph, invented by Thomas Edison in 1877. In 1904 the Carl Lindstrom Company was founded in Berlin to produce phonographs and phonograph records. Although the story takes place when modern versions of the phonograph were available, they would have been of little use to the men, who had no electricity. The older version of the phonograph depicted here is powered by hand winding instead of electricity.

5 intervals in its back wall. Otherwise there was no structure or remnant of a structure visible over the dome of the darkling<sup>2</sup> earth, but only, in sheltered hollows, the darker shadows of young trees trying again.

Under the wuthering<sup>3</sup> arch of the high wind a V of wild geese fled south. The rush of their pinions sounded briefly, and the faint, plaintive notes of their expeditionary talk. Then they left a still greater vacancy. There was the smell and expectation of snow, as there is likely to be when the wild geese fly south. From the remote distance, toward the red sky, came faintly the protracted howl and quick yap-yap of a prairie wolf.

North of the road, perhaps a hundred yards, lay the parallel and deeply intrenched course of a small creek, lined with leafless alders and willows. The creek was already silent under ice. Into the bank above it was dug a sort of cell, with a single opening, like the mouth of a mine tunnel. Within the cell there was a little red of fire, which showed dully through the opening, like a reflection or a deception of the imagination. The light came from the chary<sup>8</sup> burning of four blocks of poorly aged peat, which gave off a petty warmth and much acrid smoke. But the precious remnants of wood, old fence posts and timbers from the long-deserted dugouts, had to be saved for the real cold, for the time when a man's breath blew white, the moisture in his nostrils stiffened at once when he stepped out, and the expansive blizzards paraded for days over the vast open, swirling and settling and thickening, till the dawn of the cleared day when the sky was a thin blue-green and the terrible cold, in which a man could not live for three hours unwarmed, lay over the uniformly drifted swell of the plain.

Around the smoldering peat four men were

2. **darkling:** dark; dim.

3. **wuthering:** rushing, blustering.



seated cross-legged. Behind them, traversed by their shadows, was the earth bench, with two old and dirty army blankets, where the owner of the cell slept. In a niche in the opposite wall were a few tin utensils which caught the glint of the coals. The host was rewrapping in a piece of daubed burlap, four fine, leather-bound books. He worked slowly and very carefully, and at last tied the bundle securely with a piece of grass-woven cord. The other three looked intently upon the process, as if a great

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 13 / Selection Test 13 / Reading Check 13 / Vocabulary Test 8 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 13

tions to help students consider the techniques used by the author to make them feel as they do. Read aloud the first paragraph, stopping along the way to point out how the **setting** and the situation gradually unfold. Ask students whether they think the author describes the setting in

more detail than he should. Analyze the reasons for these details.

Readers get only a brief glimpse of the characters in this story, yet because they are vividly drawn, these men are memorable. Discuss the personalities of the four survivors. Have the stu-

dents consider what is known of the longings and outlook of each. Ask the students to respond to the ending of the story and state their ideas about the **theme** of the story.

significance lay in it. As the host tied the cord, he spoke. He was an old man, his long, matted beard and hair gray to nearly white. The shadows made his brows and cheekbones appear gnarled, his eyes and cheeks deeply sunken. His big hands, rough with frost and swollen by rheumatism, were awkward but gentle at their

10 **task.** He was like a prehistoric priest performing a fateful ceremonial rite. Also his voice had in it a suitable quality of deep, reverent despair, yet perhaps, at the moment, a sharpness of selfish satisfaction.

11 “When I perceived what was happening,” he said, “I told myself, ‘It is the end. I cannot take much; I will take these.’”

“Perhaps I was impractical,” he continued. “But for myself, I do not regret, and what do we know of those who will come after us? We are the doddering remnant of a race of mechanical fools. I have saved what I love; the soul of what was good in us here; perhaps the

12 new ones will make a strong enough beginning not to fall behind when they become clever.”

He rose with slow pain and placed the wrapped volumes in the niche with his utensils. The others watched him with the same ritualistic gaze.

“Shakespeare, the Bible, *Moby Dick*, *The Divine Comedy*,”<sup>4</sup> one of them said softly. “You might have done worse; much worse.”

13 “You will have a little soul left until you die,” said another harshly. “That is more than is

14 true of us. My brain becomes thick, like my hands.” He held the big, battered hands, with their black nails, in the glow to be seen.

“I want paper to write on,” he said. “And there is none.”

The fourth man said nothing. He sat in the shadow farthest from the fire, and sometimes his body jerked in its rags from the cold. Al-

though he was still young, he was sick, and coughed often. Writing implied a greater future than he now felt able to consider.

The old man seated himself laboriously, and reached out, groaning at the movement, to put another block of peat on the fire. With bowed heads and averted eyes, his three guests acknowledged his magnanimity.

“We thank you, Doctor Jenkins, for the reading,” said the man who had named the books.

They seemed then to be waiting for something. Doctor Jenkins understood, but was loath to comply. In an ordinary moment he would have said nothing. But the words of *The Tempest*,<sup>5</sup> which he had been reading, and the religious attention of the three, made this an unusual occasion.

15 “You wish to hear the phonograph,” he said grudgingly.

The two middle-aged men stared into the fire, unable to formulate and expose the enormity of their desire.

The young man, however, said anxiously, between suppressed coughs, “Oh, please,” like an excited child.

The old man rose again in his difficult way, and went to the back of the cell. He returned and placed tenderly upon the packed floor, where the firelight might fall upon it, an old, portable phonograph in a black case. He smoothed the top with his hand, and then opened it. The lovely green-felt-covered disk became visible.

“I have been using thorns as needles,” he said. “But tonight, because we have a musician among us”—he bent his head to the young man, almost invisible in the shadow—“I will use a steel needle. There are only three left.”

The two middle-aged men stared at him in speechless adoration. The one with the big

10

**Simile.** Comparing host to prehistoric priest performing ceremony creates sense of mystery and heightens **suspense**.

11

**Characterization.** That old man elected to take books tells reader he values human creativity and expression. His foresight also indicates he is practical and perceptive, evidently more so than other men in cell.

12

**Who are the “new ones” the man refers to?** Coming generations who will be left with rebuilding civilization.

13

**What does having “a little soul left” mean?** Old man has books expressing human spirit; he can live more fully than someone limited to physical existence.

14

**Simile.** Speaker expresses fear of losing contact with the masterpieces of intellectual and spiritual living and thus losing his capacity for intellectual thought.

15

Jenkins knows the phonograph and records are wearing out; he is trying to save this part of “the soul of what was good in us.”

4. *Moby Dick*: a classic American novel by Herman Melville (1819–1891); *The Divine Comedy*: a great epic poem by Dante Alighieri (1265–1321).

5. *The Tempest*: Shakespeare's last great comedy.

**16**  
*Why does young man cry as if hurt?* Understands Jenkins' great sacrifice in using steel needle and hesitates to accept it.

**17**  
**Characterization.** Jenkins is generous and sympathetic, perhaps because he fears the sick young man will die soon.

**18**  
*Why would they remember more if only one is played?* Answers will vary. Perhaps pleasure is greater if they do not indulge in too much at once.

**19**  
The young man may find the memories evoked by Gershwin's "New York" painful.

**20**  
**Characterization.** Man is described as "harsh." Comments indicate he prefers story of struggle with fierce white whale to idealistic poems and believes that others can also relate better to his choice because of their struggle to survive.

**21**  
*Absolute* here means "perfection."

**22**  
Man expresses belief that Shelley is too far removed from harsh reality of their situation.

hands, who wanted to write, moved his lips, but the whisper was not audible.

**16** "Oh, don't," cried the young man, as if he were hurt. "The thorns will do beautifully."

"No," the old man said. "I have become accustomed to the thorns, but they are not really

**17** good. For you, my young friend, we will have good music tonight.

"After all," he added generously, and beginning to wind the phonograph, which creaked, "they can't last forever."

"No, nor we," the man who needed to write said harshly. "The needle, by all means."

"Oh, thanks," said the young man. "Thanks," he said again, in a low, excited voice, and then stifled his coughing with a bowed head.

"The records, though," said the old man when he had finished winding, "are a different matter. Already they are very worn. I do not play them more than once a week. One, once a week, that is what I allow myself.

"More than a week I cannot stand it; not to hear them," he apologized.

"No, how could you?" cried the young man. "And with them here like this."

"A man can stand anything," said the man who wanted to write, in his harsh, antagonistic voice.

"Please, the music," said the young man.

**18** "Only the one," said the old man. "In the long run we will remember more that way."

He had a dozen records with luxuriant gold and red seals. Even in that light the others could see that the threads of the records were becoming worn. Slowly he read out the titles, and the tremendous, dead names of the composers and the artists and the orchestras. The three worked upon the names in their minds, carefully. It was difficult to select from such a wealth what they would at once most like to remember. Finally the man who wanted to write named Gershwin's "New York."

**19** "Oh, no," cried the sick young man, and then could say nothing more because he had to cough. The others understood him, and the harsh man withdrew his selection and waited for the musician to choose.

The musician begged Doctor Jenkins to read the titles again, very slowly, so that he could remember the sounds. While they were read, he lay back against the wall, his eyes closed, his thin, horny hand pulling at his light beard, and listened to the voices and the orchestras and the single instruments in his mind.

When the reading was done he spoke despairingly. "I have forgotten," he complained. "I cannot hear them clearly.

"There are things missing," he explained.

"I know," said Doctor Jenkins. "I thought that I knew all of Shelley<sup>6</sup> by heart. I should have brought Shelley."

**20** "That's more soul than we can use," said the harsh man. "*Moby Dick* is better.

"By God, we can understand that," he emphasized.

The doctor nodded.

**21** "Still," said the man who had admired the books, "we need the absolute if we are to keep a grasp on anything.

"Anything but these sticks and peat clods and rabbit snares," he said bitterly.

**22** "Shelley desired an ultimate absolute," said the harsh man. "It's too much," he said. "It's no good; no earthly good."

The musician selected a Debussy<sup>7</sup> nocturne. The others considered and approved. They rose to their knees to watch the doctor prepare for the playing, so that they appeared to be actually in an attitude of worship. The peat glow showed the thinness of their bearded faces,

6. **Shelley:** Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), an English poet known for his devotion to ideals and philosophical speculation.

7. **Debussy:** Claude Debussy (də-byōō'sē), a French composer (1862–1918).



and the deep lines in them, and revealed the condition of their garments. The other two continued to kneel as the old man carefully lowered the needle onto the spinning disk, but the musician suddenly drew back against the wall again, with his knees up, and buried his face in his hands.

At the first notes of the piano the listeners were startled. They stared at each other. Even the musician lifted his head in amazement, but then quickly bowed it again, strainingly, as if he were suffering from a pain back against the wall again, with his knees up, and buried his face in his hands.

At the first notes of the piano the listeners were startled. They stared at each other. Even the musician lifted his head in amazement, but then quickly bowed it again, strainingly, as if he were suffering from a pain back against the wall again, with his knees up, and buried his face in his hands.

He heard nothing but what was there. At the final, whispering disappearance, but moving quietly, so that the others would not hear him and look at him, he let his head fall back in agony, as if it were drawn there by the hair, and clenched the fingers of one hand over his teeth. He sat that way while the others were silent, and until they began to breathe again normally. His drawn-up legs were trembling violently.

Quickly Doctor Jenkins lifted the needle off, to save it, and not to spoil the recollection with scraping. When he had stopped the whirling of the sacred disk, he courteously left the phonograph open and by the fire, in sight.

The others, however, understood. The musician rose last, but then abruptly, and went

quickly out at the door without saying anything. The others stopped at the door and gave their thanks in low voices. The doctor nodded magnificently.

"Come again," he invited, "in a week. We will have the 'New York.'"

When the two had gone together, out toward the rimed<sup>8</sup> road, he stood in the entrance, peering and listening. At first there was only the resonant boom of the wind overhead, and then, far over the dome of the dead, dark plain, the wolf cry lamenting. In the rifts of clouds the doctor saw four stars flying. It impressed the doctor that one of them had just been obscured by the beginning of a flying cloud at the very moment he heard what he had been listening for, a sound of suppressed coughing. It was not near by, however. He believed that down against the pale alders he could see the moving shadow.

With nervous hands he lowered the piece of canvas which served as his door, and pegged it at the bottom. Then quickly and quietly, looking at the piece of canvas frequently, he slipped the records into the case, snapped the lid shut, and carried the phonograph to his couch. There, pausing often to stare at the canvas and listen, he dug earth from the wall and disclosed a piece of board. Behind this there was a deep hole in the wall, into which he put the phonograph. After a moment's consideration, he went over and reached down his bundle of books and inserted it also. Then, guardedly, he once more sealed up the hole with the board and the earth. He also changed his blankets, and the grass-stuffed sack which served as a pillow, so that he could lie facing the entrance. After carefully placing two more blocks of peat on the fire, he stood for a long time watching the stretched canvas, but it seemed to billow naturally with the first gusts

8. rimed: frosty.

23

*What is the response of the musician to the recording? Why?* Appears to be suffering, perhaps from intense, ecstatic joy of hearing music again.

24

*Imagery.* Description of notes as "wet, blue-green" suggests the fluidness of water, serenity of blue skies, and spirited, green life of nature. "Tinkled" suggests brook as well as bell.

25

*Characterization.* Musician thinks only of music itself. He is desperately frustrated by so brief an encounter with what should have been his lifelong career.

26

*Diction.* "Sacred disk" adds religious tone to story. Doctor has already been characterized as priest.

27

*Suspense.* Jenkins worries musician may come back, that his intense desire to hear music may result in violence.

28

Jenkins feels he must be prepared to defend his possession of remnants of the "soul of what was good in us." Ironically, he is prepared to use brute force.

### READING CHECK

1. Mainly peat (p. 140).
2. Some books, records, and a phonograph (p. 141).
3. To save the needles (p. 141).
4. Once a week (p. 142).
5. Hides it and keeps lead pipe by his bed (pp. 143–144).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. A terrible war. 1b. Some examples are “black cloud strips like threats,” “mute darkness,” “sensation of torment,” and “scars of gigantic bombs.” 1c. Bomb scars “made a little natural” by new grass and “young trees trying again.”

2a. Physically resembles image of ancient priest; voice is deep and reverent; has been reduced to prehistoric style of existence; men gather around him reverently. 2b. Classic books, records, and portable phonograph.

3. Believes humans have placed too much emphasis on technology.

4a. Memories of books and music. 4b. Men recognize Jenkins is less likely than they are to lose memory of things they revere.

5a. Symbol of mechanical advancement of perished civilization. 5b. Ironically, symbol of technology is also means of preserving artistic accomplishments.

6a. Afraid his treasures may be stolen. 6b. Opinions will vary. Guests do not seem to be people who would steal from him, but readers may note that Jenkins hears the musician’s cough.

7a. Civilization that could produce tremendous mechanical and artistic works is reduced to a frightened man guarding his possessions in cavelike cell. “Civilized” man must use a piece of lead pipe—a club—to protect himself. 7b. Humanity can destroy itself with its own technology. 7c. “We are the doddering remnant of a race of mechanical fools.”

of a lowering wind. At last he prayed, and got in under his blankets, and closed his smoke-smarting eyes. On the inside of the bed, next the wall, he could feel with his hand, the comfortable piece of lead pipe.

### Reading Check

1. What do the men use for fuel?
2. What has Dr. Jenkins managed to salvage?
3. Why has Dr. Jenkins been using thorns for his phonograph?
4. How often does he play the records?
5. How does he protect his phonograph?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The first three paragraphs focus on the **setting** of the story. **a.** Judging from details in the description, what event has occurred? **b.** Which words and phrases contribute to an ominous, or threatening, mood? **c.** What evidence is there that the earth is beginning to heal?
2. We learn that Dr. Jenkins has managed to salvage a few great works of civilization. **a.** How is he “like a prehistoric priest performing a fateful ceremonial rite”? **b.** What are the objects that his guests revere?
3. Dr. Jenkins says, “We are the doddering remnant of a race of mechanical fools.” What does this statement reveal about his values?
4. The men in the story do not seem concerned about food or shelter or other physical comforts. **a.** What do they fear losing?

### CLOSURE

Ask students to comment on Clark’s use of **setting** to create **mood** and **atmosphere** for this poignant story and to draw conclusions about the story’s message about mankind.

**b.** How is the fear implied in this statement: “You will have a little soul left until you die”?

5. A **symbol** is something that has meaning in itself and that also stands for something else. **a.** How is the phonograph in this story a symbol? **b.** How does it bring out “the soul of what was good in us”?

6. Consider Dr. Jenkins’ actions after the guests leave. **a.** Why does he take such precautions? **b.** Do you believe that the threat is real?

7a. What is ironic about the ending of the story? **b.** What point is Clark trying to make? **c.** Which statement in the story comes closest to expressing this point?

### Literary Elements

#### Setting

The element of **setting** is the physical background of a story—its time and place. Sometimes an entire story is dependent upon setting. Think, for example, of “The Most Dangerous Game” (page 12), where the conflict of Rainsford and Zaroff is confined to Ship-Trap Island. In a story such as “The Musgrave Ritual” (page 46), the setting is an integral part of the plot. Setting can also lend atmosphere, as the underground crypt does in “The Cask of Amontillado” (page 95).

Sometimes setting in a story can be **symbolic**, representing some idea larger or more significant than itself. Walter Van Tilburg Clark projects us into a nightmare world that has been ravaged by a terrible war. The winter landscape has been scarred by bombs and tanks. The human beings who have survived this holocaust now live in dugouts with scarcely 1 any shelter from the elements. Do you think 2 this setting has a symbolic meaning? What ideas does it convey?

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Assign students to write a sequel in which they project into the future the lives of the characters in this story. Students should consider what new hardships these men might face and whether any other communities of survivors exist.

Ask a few students to locate recordings of a Debussy nocturne and Gershwin's "New York." Have them bring the recordings to school and play parts of them for the class to hear.

Students interested in Clark's theme may want to read another short story in the same vein. "By

the Waters of Babylon" by Stephen Vincent Benét is a good one that is often anthologized.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Distinguishing Denotative from Connotative Meanings

In addition to their literal, or **denotative**, meanings, words may have suggested, or **connotative**, meanings. The word *sunset*, for example, denotes the disappearance of the sun below the horizon at the end of each day. The word *sunset* also evokes certain associations. Some people connect the sunset with thoughts of great natural splendor; others may think of it as the waning or death of the day.

In the opening passage of "The Portable Phonograph," Walter Van Tilburg Clark chooses words and phrases that have powerful connotations. What are the dictionary definitions of the following italicized words? What additional feelings or qualities do they connote?

- a ... through the dead, matted grass and *isolated* weed stalks of the prairie...
- b They were the *scars* of gigantic bombs...
- c Along the road there were *rakish* remnants of fence.
- d ... faint, *plaintive* notes...

## Writing About Literature

### Discussing the Role of Setting

Choose one of the stories you have read in this unit and consider how setting functions in the story. Here are some questions to guide you:

1. Is the setting chiefly important to the plot? In other words, is the physical background of the story essential to the action?
2. Does the setting provide atmosphere? What kind of mood does it evoke?
3. Does setting contribute to understanding of characters? Does it help explain personalities?

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

or indicate characters' motivations? Would the characters fit as well in another physical setting?

Discuss your findings in a brief essay.

## About the Author

Walter Van Tilburg Clark (1909–1971)



Walter Van Tilburg Clark was born in East Oreland, Maine. He taught English and sports in New York State high schools before becoming a professor at the University of Montana, San Francisco State College (which is now California State University), and the University of Nevada. He also served as guest lecturer at universities across the country. Clark wrote stories and novels about the American West. His stories portray the emotions of fear and insecurity in characters who are often in conflict with nature. Two of his most famous novels, *The Ox-Bow Incident* and *The Track of the Cat*, were made into motion pictures, and his stories have been translated into more than twenty languages. Clark loved the wide-open spaces of the Pacific Northwest and he was interested in preserving the earth's natural resources and wildlife.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Descriptions of landscape suggest symbolic meaning ("black cloud strips like threats," "a sensation of torment," "violence of upper air").

2. Landscape is symbolic of mankind's fate after holocaust. Humanity, like landscape, is almost destroyed and must attempt to hold on to what it has and begin growing again.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1a. **Isolated:** separated, set apart; connotes loneliness, deprivation.

1b. **Scars:** lingering signs of damage or injury; has connotation of unsightliness and suggests a painful cause.

1c. **Rakish:** dissolute; connotes a lively spirit.

1d. **Plaintive:** expressing sorrow, melancholy; suggests longing or need for change.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

You may wish to expand this assignment by having students compare and contrast the role of setting in two different stories.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Walter Van Tilburg Clark has published several novels and short story collections. Among them are *The City of Trembling Leaves*, *The Watchful Gods*, and *Tim Hazard*.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify and interpret important events and actions in the story that affect the main character. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the literary elements of **setting** and **characterization**. Ask students to look for details Malamud uses to show the changes the main character undergoes.

### A Summer's Reading

After students have read the selection, margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **characterization** and important events.

1

**Characterization.** George is directly described as being impulsive and impatient.

2

**Point of view.** Story is told from George's vantage point by a third-person narrator. Narrator's limited omniscience reveals George's thoughts.

3

**Exposition.** Information about George's family provides clues to his life style.

4

George seems to lack any real goals or interests.

5

George is contrasted with his sister, who sometimes reads "good books."

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 152 will give students practice in distinguishing informal English from slang.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Nearly everyone has a problem like George's—some nagging, neglected promise to accomplish something. Have students read with the purpose of studying George's case.

# A Summer's Reading

**BERNARD MALAMUD**

*Some stories, like "The Most Dangerous Game," take you to strange, remote settings. Other stories, like this one, have realistic, recognizable settings. Note how carefully Malamud creates a sense of the neighborhood and its people.*

- 1 George Stoyonovich was a neighborhood boy who had quit high school on an impulse when he was sixteen, run out of patience, and though he was ashamed every time he went looking for a job, when people asked him if he had finished and he had to say no, he never went back to school. This summer was a hard time for jobs and he had none. Having so much time on his hands, George thought of going to summer school, but the kids in his classes would be too young. He also considered registering in a night high school, only he didn't like the idea of the teachers always telling him what to do. He felt they had not respected him. The result was he stayed off the streets and in his room most of the day. He was close to twenty and had needs with the neighborhood girls, but no money to spend, and he couldn't get more than an occasional few cents because his father was poor, and his sister Sophie, who resembled George, a tall bony girl of twenty-three, earned very little and what she had she kept for herself. Their mother was dead, and Sophie had to take care of the house.

Very early in the morning George's father got up to go to work in a fish market. Sophie left at about eight for her long ride in the subway to a cafeteria in the Bronx.<sup>1</sup> George had his coffee by himself, then hung around in the house. When the house, a five-room railroad flat<sup>2</sup> above a butcher store, got on his nerves he cleaned it up—mopped the floors with a wet mop and put things away. But most of the time he sat in his room. In the afternoons he listened to the ball game. Otherwise he had a couple of old copies of the *World Almanac* he had bought long ago, and he liked to read in them and also the magazines and newspapers that Sophie brought home, that had been left on the tables in the cafeteria. They were mostly picture magazines about movie stars and sports figures, also usually the *News* and *Mirror*.<sup>3</sup> Sophie herself read whatever fell into her hands, although she sometimes read good books.

1. **Bronx:** a borough of New York City.

2. **railroad flat:** an apartment of rooms in a line. Each room is entered from another.

3. **News and Mirror:** daily newspapers. The *Mirror* no longer exists.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 14 / Selection Test 14 / Reading Check 14 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 14

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

George Stoyonovich, a high-school dropout, spends his summer days in an apartment in New York City, reading magazines and newspapers and listening to ball games. In the evenings, he sits in a park dreaming about better times.

Ashamed to admit that he is not working, George tells a neighbor that he is reading "maybe around a hundred" books from a list he got at the library. George is then faced with dealing with his lie.

## PRESENTATION

Responses to this story will depend on the background and outlook of your students. Some will have no patience with George's evasive and drifting ways; others may blame a drab neighborhood and a scarcity of jobs for George's

She once asked George what he did in his room all day and he said he read a lot too.

"Of what besides what I bring home? Do you ever read any worthwhile books?"

6 "Some," George answered, although he really didn't. He had tried to read a book or two that Sophie had in the house but found he was 10 in no mood for them. Lately he couldn't stand made-up stories, they got on his nerves. He wished he had some hobby to work at—as a kid he was good in carpentry, but where could he work at it? Sometimes during the day he went for walks, but mostly he did his walking after the hot sun had gone down and it was cooler in the streets.

In the evening after supper George left the house and wandered in the neighborhood. During the sultry days some of the storekeepers and their wives sat in chairs on the thick, broken sidewalks in front of their shops, fanning themselves, and George walked past them and the guys hanging out on the candy-store corner. A couple of them he had known his whole life, but nobody recognized each other. He had no place special to go, but generally, saying it till the last, he left the neighborhood 11 and walked for blocks till he came to a darkly lit little park with benches and trees and an iron railing, giving it a feeling of privacy. He 12 sat on a bench here, watching the leafy trees and the flowers blooming on the inside of the railing, thinking of a better life for himself. He thought of the jobs he had had since he had quit school—delivery boy, stock clerk, runner, lately working in a factory—and he was dissatisfied with all of them. He felt he would someday like to have a good job and live in a private house with a porch, on a street with trees. He 9 wanted to have some dough in his pocket to buy things with, and a girl to go with, so as not to be so lonely, especially on Saturday nights. He wanted people to like and respect him. He thought about these things often but mostly

when he was alone at night. Around midnight he got up and drifted back to his hot and stony neighborhood.

One time while on his walk George met Mr. Cattanzara coming home very late from work. He wondered if he was drunk but then could tell he wasn't. Mr. Cattanzara, a stocky, bald-headed man who worked in a change booth on an IRT station,<sup>4</sup> lived on the next block after George's, above a shoe repair store. Nights, during the hot weather, he sat on his stoop<sup>5</sup> in an undershirt, reading the *New York Times* in the light of the shoemaker's window. He read it from the first page to the last, then went up to sleep. And all the time he was reading the paper, his wife, a fat woman with a white face, leaned out of the window, gazing into the street, her thick white arms folded under her loose breast, on the window ledge.

Once in a while Mr. Cattanzara came home drunk, but it was a quiet drunk. He never made any trouble, only walked stiffly up the street and slowly climbed the stairs into the hall. Though drunk, he looked the same as always, except for his tight walk, the quietness, and that his eyes were wet. George liked Mr. Cattanzara because he remembered him giving him nickels to buy lemon ice with when he was a squirt. Mr. Cattanzara was a different type than those in the neighborhood. He asked different questions than the others when he met you, and he seemed to know what went on in all the newspapers. He read them, as his fat sick wife watched from the window.

"What are you doing with yourself this summer, George?" Mr. Cattanzara asked. "I see you walkin' around at nights."

George felt embarrassed. "I like to walk."

"What are you doin' in the day now?"

"Nothing much just right now. I'm waiting

4. IRT station: The IRT is one of the public-transportation systems in New York City.

5. stoop: staircase leading to the entrance of a building.

6

**Characterization.** George lies to his sister about his lazy reading habits, indicating he feels guilty about his lack of discipline.

7

George's isolation from his peers is evident. Although they do recognize one another, they don't acknowledge it.

8

**Characterization.** George daydreams and escapes the reality of his situation. He is dissatisfied, lonely young man.

9

*What is it about George's dreams that resemble the desires of other people? Most people want the respect and companionship of others.*

10

Description of Mr. Cattanzara suggests George has observed the man for some time.

11

**Why are Mr. Cattanzara's eyes wet? What does this indicate about his life? Probably he has been crying. He has sad life.**

12

**Characterization.** Mr. Cattanzara's reading makes him seem different from other neighbors.

difficulties. Ask them to consider whether anyone really can help a young man or woman develop a strong character or whether character is something that must be built by the individual.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

The Bronx is named after Jonas Bronck, who purchased the area from the Indians in 1639—in a transaction separate from the celebrated purchase of Manhattan for \$24 worth of beads. There are over 1.5 million inhabitants packed into the 41 square miles of the Bronx, which is situated directly north of Manhattan. The Bronx is the only one of New York City's five boroughs to be located on the mainland. The Bronx has always been primarily a residential area; it was the long-time home of poet and mystery writer Edgar Allan Poe.

#### Ideas for Writing

George's neighborhood is referred to as "hot and stony." He leaves his home and neighborhood to dream about the future, yet he returns to the same routine without taking action to make his dreams become reality. Have students think of a goal—one that they have not yet been able to achieve. Here are a few examples: qualifying for the honor roll, losing or gaining weight, learning something new (typing, sewing, golf), overcoming timidity, improving personal appearance. Have them list logical steps they might take to achieve the goal. Some students might be willing to share their goals with the class.





for a job." Since it shamed him to admit he wasn't working, George said, "I'm staying home—but I'm reading a lot to pick up my education."

Mr. Cattanzara looked interested. He mopped his hot face with a red handkerchief.

"What are you readin'?"

George hesitated, then said, "I got a list of books in the library once, and now I'm gonna read them this summer." He felt strange and a little unhappy saying this, but he wanted Mr. Cattanzara to respect him.

"How many books are there on it?"

"I never counted them. Maybe around a hundred."

Mr. Cattanzara whistled through his teeth.

"I figure if I did that," George went on earnestly, "it would help me in my education. I don't mean the kind they give you in high school. I want to know different things than they learn there, if you know what I mean."

The change maker nodded. "Still and all, one hundred books is a pretty big load for one summer."

"It might take longer."

"After you're finished with some, maybe you and I can shoot the breeze about them?" said Mr. Cattanzara.

"When I'm finished," George answered.

Mr. Cattanzara went home and George continued on his walk. After that, though he had the urge to, George did nothing different from usual. He still took his walks at night, ending up in the little park. But one evening the shoemaker on the next block stopped George to say he was a good boy, and George figured that Mr. Cattanzara had told him all about the books he was reading. From the shoemaker it must have gone down the street, because George saw a couple of people smiling kindly at him, though nobody spoke to him personally. He felt a little better around the neighbor-

hood and liked it more, though not so much he would want to live in it forever. He had never exactly disliked the people in it, yet he had never liked them very much either. It was the fault of the neighborhood. To his surprise, George found out that his father and Sophie knew about his reading too. His father was too shy to say anything about it—he was never much of a talker in his whole life—but Sophie was softer to George, and she showed him in other ways she was proud of him.

As the summer went on George felt in a good mood about things. He cleaned the house every day, as a favor to Sophie, and he enjoyed the ball games more. Sophie gave him a buck a week allowance, and though it still wasn't enough and he had to use it carefully, it was a helluva lot better than just having two bits now and then. What he bought with the money—cigarettes mostly, an occasional beer or movie ticket—he got a big kick out of. Life wasn't so bad if you knew how to appreciate it. Occasionally he bought a paperback book from the newsstand, but he never got around to reading it, though he was glad to have a couple of books in his room. But he read thoroughly Sophie's magazines and newspapers.

And at night was the most enjoyable time, because when he passed the storekeepers sitting outside their stores, he could tell they regarded him highly. He walked erect, and though he did not say much to them, or they to him, he could feel approval on all sides. A couple of nights he felt so good that he skipped the park at the end of the evening. He just wandered in the neighborhood, where people had known him from the time he was a kid playing punchball whenever there was a game of it going; he wandered there, then came home and got undressed for bed, feeling fine.

For a few weeks he had talked only once with Mr. Cattanzara, and though the change maker

**13**  
**Plot.** This statement propels the story in a new direction.

**14**  
**What might be the cause of George's "strange" and "unhappy" feelings?** Guilt, or perhaps a realization that he *should* be reading.

**15**  
**Characterization.** George is quick to blame his problems on his surroundings.

**16**  
**Sophie seems to be especially fond of George.**

**17**  
**Characterization.** George enjoys his new-found respect, even though he knows it is based on a lie.

18

George's lie now affects his behavior; he alters his walking route to avoid seeing Mr. Cattanzara.

19

**Characterization.** George's fear reflects his own guilt. Mr. Cattanzara is unlikely to respond in this fashion.

20

George only temporarily escapes the consequences of lying to Mr. Cattanzara.

21

**Why does George stop reading magazines and newspapers?** Perhaps he feels guilty and dispirited.

22

Sophie seems to believe George's specious explanation.

23

**Characterization.** George's own guilt tempts him to abuse someone who believed in him.

24

**Characterization.** Mr. Cattanzara sees through George.

had said nothing more about the books, asked no questions, his silence made George a little uneasy. For a while George didn't pass in front

18 of Mr. Cattanzara's house any more, until one night, forgetting himself, he approached it from a different direction than he usually did when he did. It was already past midnight. The street, except for one or two people, was deserted, and George was surprised when he saw Mr. Cattanzara still reading his newspaper by the light of the streetlamp overhead. His impulse was to stop at the stoop and talk to him. He wasn't sure what he wanted to say, though he felt the words would come when he began to talk; but the more he thought about it, the more the idea scared him, and he decided he'd better not. He even considered beating it home by another street, but he was too near Mr. Cattanzara, and the change maker might see him as he ran, and get annoyed. So George unobtrusively crossed the street, trying to make it seem as if he had to look in a store window on the other side, which he did, and then went on, 19 uncomfortable at what he was doing. He feared Mr. Cattanzara would glance up from his paper and call him a dirty rat for walking on the other side of the street, but all he did was sit there, sweating through his undershirt, his bald head shining in the dim light as he read his *Times*, and upstairs his fat wife leaned out of the window, seeming to read the paper 20 along with him. George thought she would spy him and yell out to Mr. Cattanzara, but she never moved her eyes off her husband.

George made up his mind to stay away from the change maker until he had got some of his softback books read, but when he started them and saw they were mostly storybooks, he lost his interest and didn't bother to finish them.

21 He lost his interest in reading other things too. Sophie's magazines and newspapers went unread. She saw them piling up on a chair in his room and asked why he was no longer looking

at them, and George told her it was because of all the other reading he had to do. Sophie said she had guessed that was it. So for most of the day, George had the radio on, turning to music when he was sick of the human voice. He kept the house fairly neat, and Sophie said nothing on the days when he neglected it. She was still kind and gave him his extra buck, though things weren't so good for him as they had been before.

But they were good enough, considering. Also his night walks invariably picked him up, no matter how bad the day was. Then one night George saw Mr. Cattanzara coming down the street toward him. George was about to turn and run but he recognized from Mr. Cattanzara's walk that he was drunk, and if so, probably he would not even bother to notice him. So George kept on walking straight ahead until he came abreast of Mr. Cattanzara and though he felt wound up enough to pop into the sky, he was not surprised when Mr. Cattanzara passed him without a word, walking slowly, his face and body stiff. George drew a breath in relief at his narrow escape, when he heard his name called, and there stood Mr. Cattanzara at his elbow, smelling like the inside of a beer barrel. His eyes were sad as he gazed 23 at George, and George felt so intensely uncomfortable he was tempted to shove the drunk aside and continue on his walk.

But he couldn't act that way to him, and, besides, Mr. Cattanzara took a nickel out of his pants pocket and handed it to him.

"Go buy yourself a lemon ice, Georgie."

"It's not that time any more, Mr. Cattanzara," George said, "I am a big guy now."

24 "No, you ain't," said Mr. Cattanzara, to which George made no reply he could think of.

"How are all your books comin' along now?" Mr. Cattanzara asked. Though he tried to stand steady, he swayed a little.

"Fine, I guess," said George, feeling the red crawling up his face.

"You ain't sure?" The change maker smiled slyly, a way George had never seen him smile.

"Sure I'm sure. They're fine."

Though his head swayed in little arcs, Mr. Cattanzara's eyes were steady. He had small blue eyes which could hurt if you looked at them too long.

"George," he said, "name me one book on that list that you read this summer, and I will drink to your health."

"I don't want anybody drinking to me."

"Name me one so I can ask you a question on it. Who can tell, if it's a good book maybe I might wanna read it myself."

George knew he looked passable on the outside, but inside he was crumbling apart.

Unable to reply, he shut his eyes, but when— years later—he opened them, he saw that Mr. Cattanzara had, out of pity, gone away, but in his ears he still heard the words he had said when he left: "George, don't do what I did."

The next night he was afraid to leave his room, and though Sophie argued with him he wouldn't open the door.

"What are you doing in there?" she asked.

"Nothing."

"Aren't you reading?"

"No."

She was silent a minute, then asked, "Where do you keep the books you read? I never see any in your room outside of a few cheap trashy ones."

He wouldn't tell her.

"In that case you're not worth a buck of my hard-earned money. Why should I break my back for you? Go on out, you bum, and get a job."

He stayed in his room for almost a week, except to sneak into the kitchen when nobody was home. Sophie railed at him, then begged

him to come out, and his old father wept, but George wouldn't budge, though the weather was terrible and his small room stifling. He found it very hard to breathe, each breath was like drawing a flame into his lungs.

One night, unable to stand the heat anymore, he burst into the street at one A.M., a shadow of himself. He hoped to sneak to the park without being seen, but there were people all over the block, wilted and listless, waiting for a breeze. George lowered his eyes and walked, in disgrace, away from them, but before long he discovered they were still friendly to him. He figured Mr. Cattanzara hadn't told on him. Maybe when he woke up out of his drunk the next morning, he had forgotten all about meeting George. George felt his confidence slowly come back to him.

That same night a man on a street corner asked him if it was true that he had finished reading so many books, and George admitted he had. The man said it was a wonderful thing for a boy his age to read so much.

"Yeah," George said, but he felt relieved. He hoped nobody would mention the books anymore, and when, after a couple of days, he accidentally met Mr. Cattanzara again, he didn't, though George had the idea he was the one who had started the rumor that he had finished all the books.

One evening in the fall, George ran out of his house to the library, where he hadn't been in years. There were books all over the place, wherever he looked, and though he was struggling to control an inward trembling, he easily counted off a hundred, then sat down at a table to read.

25

Mr. Cattanzara's piercing blue eyes hurt George because he knows Mr. Cattanzara can see through his pretenses.

26

*How does Mr. Cattanzara make George face the consequences of his lie?* Gazes at him sadly, offers to buy lemon ice to indicate that George is childish, exposes George's ignorance of books he is supposed to be reading.

27

*Figurative language.* George's shame makes time seem to crawl as he closes his eyes to Mr. Cattanzara's truths.

28

*What does Mr. Cattanzara mean by "don't do what I did"?* He wasted opportunities for education and better life; wants George to avoid such mistakes.

29

George is no longer lying to his sister.

30

*Why has Mr. Cattanzara spread the rumor that George has succeeded in reading his one hundred books?* To shame George into accomplishing his task.

31

*Climax.* Perhaps George's "inward trembling" is the physical symptom of a momentous decision that will change his life.



### READING CHECK

1. Other students will be younger than he; does not want teachers telling him what to do (p. 146).
2. Father and sister (p. 146).
3. Reading magazines, listening to ball games (p. 146).
4. A park (p. 147).
5. Mr. Cattanzara (p. 149).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. No high-school diploma, no job, no money. 1b. Opinions may vary. He is not to blame for scarcity of jobs, family's poverty, or mother's death, but he is lazy and undisciplined.
- 2a. Opinions may vary. Neighbors are poor, hard-working, friendly. 2b. Opinions may vary. School kids are either working or enjoying vacation. Heat contributes to atmosphere.
- 3a. Ashamed to admit he is not working. 3b. People become more friendly. 3c. Likes it more, enjoys the approval of neighbors.
- 4a. Mr. Cattanzara pins him down with questions. 4b. Thinks he has wasted his life and does not want George to do the same.
- 5a. Opinions may vary. He feels guilty. 5b. Opinions may vary. He seems to be committed to accomplishing something with his life. 5c. Time for new beginnings, when George's "school" begins.

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Fish market, cafeteria, five-room railroad flat, sidewalks in front of shops, library, movie tickets.

### Reading Check

1. Why does George decide against going back to school?
2. Whom does George live with?
3. How does George spend the day?
4. Where does George like to walk in the evenings?
5. How do the people in the neighborhood learn about George's ambitious reading project?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

- 1a. What is George's problem at the opening of the story? b. How much of George's difficulty is caused by circumstances and how much by his own character?
2. This story takes place in New York City during the summer. a. What impression do you have of George's neighborhood and his neighbors? b. Why is it significant that this story takes place in the summer rather than, say, in the spring?
- 3a. Why does George lie to Mr. Cattanzara about the books he is reading? b. How does this lie affect George's status in the neighborhood? c. How does his attitude toward the neighborhood change?
- 4a. How is George made to face the consequences of his lie? b. What does Mr. Cattanzara mean when he says "George, don't do what I did"?
- 5a. What do you think finally drives George to the library? b. Do you believe this action marks a change in his life? Why or why not? c. Why is it significant that the story ends in the fall?

### CLOSURE

Ask students to consider whether George's interactions with his neighbors and family influence him to begin reading.

### Literary Elements

#### Verisimilitude

A short story is often given a setting that is true to a specific time and place. This appearance of reality in fiction is known as **verisimilitude** (vē'r'ə-sīm-īl'ə-tōōd', -tyōōd'). We know from specific references to daily newspapers and to public-transportation systems, as well as other details, that "A Summer's Reading" takes place in New York City within recent times. What other details in Malamud's story re-create a modern urban setting?

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Distinguishing Informal English from Slang

Standard English can be formal or informal. **Informal standard English** is the language used most of the time in writing and speaking. **Formal standard English** is more elegant and elaborate. It is used in scholarly books, research papers, technical writing, and on formal occasions in public speaking.

**Slang** lies outside of standard usage and is generally used in very informal situations. Slang tends to be colorful, humorous, and fresh. Sometimes slang is made up or invented. Sometimes slang is the result of giving a new meaning to an established word or phrase: "in the doghouse." A slang expression may pass quickly from the language or it may become part of standard usage.

In this sentence from "A Summer's Reading," the italicized phrase is an example of informal standard English:

George had his coffee by himself, then *hung around* in the house.

In a formal context, instead of "hang around" you might use "loiter" or "linger indolently."

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

George makes the comment that life is not so bad if you know how to appreciate it. Have each student write a paragraph describing ways he or she thinks a person can learn to appreciate life. Collect these paragraphs and read a few aloud

to prompt discussion.

For more Malamud stories, refer interested students to the collection *The Magic Barrel* or to the novels *The Natural* and *The Assistant*.

Prepare a list of books that students might read during their free time in the summer. Give

each student a copy of the list and discuss some of the selections. Have students comment briefly on the ones they have read. Encourage them to keep the list for future reading.

The phrase *hang out* is slang:

... George walked past them and the guys *hanging out* on the candy-store corner.

In standard English you might use “spending time” or “frequenting.”

Dictionaries often identify informal and nonstandard usage of words. Using your dictionary, find out if each of the italicized expressions listed here is classified as informal standard English or slang. Tell what each one means.

- a He wanted to have some *dough* in his pocket to buy things with ...
- b George liked Mr. Cattanzara because he remembered him giving him nickels to buy lemon ice with when he was a *squirt*.
- c ... it was a ... lot better than just having *two bits* now and then.
- d He even considered *beating it* home by another street ...

## Writing About Literature

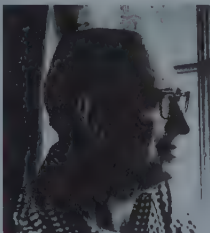
### ► Comparing Characters

Compare George with Alfred Higgins in “All the Years of Her Life” (page 70). What similarity is there in the way both characters deal with their problems? What do you think each boy discovers about himself?

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## About the Author

**Bernard Malamud (1914–1986)**



Bernard Malamud was born in Brooklyn, New York. He attended the City College of New York and Columbia University. In 1952 his first novel, *The Natural*, was published. His second

novel, *The Assistant*, appeared in 1957. “A Summer’s Reading” is from a collection of stories called *The Magic Barrel*, which received the National Book Award for fiction in 1959. Malamud’s other works include *A New Life* (1961), *Idiots First* (1963), *The Fixer* (1966), which received both a National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize for fiction, *Pictures of Fidelman* (1969), and *The Tenants* (1971).

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

- 1a. *Dough*: money (slang)
- 1b. *Squirt*: young person, child (informal)
- 1c. *Two bits*: twenty-five cents (slang)
- 1d. *Beating it*: leaving, going away (slang)

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Students may not agree with each other in their comparison of George and Alfred Higgins. Encourage them to back up their ideas with evidence from the stories.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Widely considered to be one of the first chroniclers of the Jewish-American experience, Malamud often treats the hardships of his characters with a bitter and ironic wit.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze how **setting** contributes to the **mood** of "The Scarlet Ibis." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote draws attention to the author's use of **setting**. As they read, ask students to focus on the elements of setting that are integral to the development of the story. They might consider how a change in setting would alter the story.

## The Scarlet Ibis

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **figurative language** as well as **characterization** and **setting**.

1

**Setting.** Narrator first describes the farm scene as it was on a certain crucial day. "Clove of seasons" here is interval between summer and autumn. **Description** includes images of decay ("bleeding tree," "stained," "rotting brown," "rank," "graveyard," and so on).

2

Pronoun *me* is first indication that story is told from first-person **point of view**.

3

**Setting.** Same farm scene is described in the present. Scene has changed. Images contrast with previous description (garden is "prim," house is "gleaming white," "bleeding tree" is gone).

4

Story opens in present, but now narrator recalls past.

5

**Caul:** fetal membrane sometimes covering child's head at birth.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 164 will give students practice in determining the meaning of words in the story from their contextual setting.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to imagine that they are growing up on a farm in the early 1900s. Television and radio have not been invented; automobiles and telephones are scarce. Ask them what they could do for entertainment.

# The Scarlet Ibis<sup>o</sup>

JAMES HURST

*The two elements of setting—time and place—are important in this story. How does the rural setting contribute to what happens in the story? What is the importance of the year, 1918, to the story?*

1 It was in the clove of seasons, summer was dead but autumn had not yet been born, that the ibis lit in the bleeding tree. The flower garden was stained with rotting brown magnolia petals and ironweeds grew rank amid the purple phlox. The five o'clocks by the chimney still marked time, but the oriole nest in the elm was untenanted and rocked back and forth like an empty cradle. The last graveyard flowers were blooming, and their smell drifted across the cotton field and through every room of our house, speaking softly the names of our dead.

2 It's strange that all this is still so clear to me, now that that summer has long since fled and  
3 time has had its way. A grindstone stands where the bleeding tree stood, just outside the kitchen door, and now if an oriole sings in the elm, its song seems to die up in the leaves, a silvery dust. The flower garden is prim, the house a gleaming white, and the pale fence across the yard stands straight and spruce. But sometimes (like right now), as I sit in the cool, green-draped parlor, the grindstone begins to turn, and time with all its changes is ground  
4 away—and I remember Doodle.

Doodle was just about the craziest brother a boy ever had. Of course, he wasn't a crazy crazy like old Miss Leedie, who was in love with President Wilson and wrote him a letter every day, but was a nice crazy, like someone you meet in your dreams. He was born when I was six and was, from the outset, a disappointment. He seemed all head, with a tiny body which was red and shriveled like an old man's. Everybody thought he was going to die—everybody except Aunt Nicey, who had delivered him. She said he would live because he  
5 was born in a caul and cauls were made from Jesus' nightgown. Daddy had Mr. Heath, the carpenter, build a little mahogany coffin for him. But he didn't die, and when he was three months old Mama and Daddy decided they might as well name him. They named him William Armstrong, which was like tying a big tail on a small kite. Such a name sounds good only on a tombstone.

I thought myself pretty smart at many things, like holding my breath, running, jumping, or climbing the vines in Old Woman Swamp, and I wanted more than anything else someone to race to Horsehead Landing, someone to box with, and someone to perch with in the top fork of the great pine behind the barn,

<sup>o</sup> **Ibis** (i't'bis): a wading bird with a long bill.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 15 / Selection Test 15 / Reading Check 15 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 15



### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

A man tells about his childhood relationship with his younger brother, who had been expected to die shortly after birth. The younger boy does not die. He is renamed "Doodle" because he crawls backward like a doodlebug and is physically

weak. The older brother is motivated by pride to teach Doodle to walk. After the success of his first efforts, he and Doodle devise a rigorous development plan to make Doodle as strong as other boys.

### PRESENTATION

Tell students that the story they will read is set in 1918, when America was involved in World War I. The narrator and his brother, like most Americans, lived in a rural area, where the sole source of entertainment for children was the great out-



Gibbes Art Gallery

*The Reserve in Summer* by Alice Ravenel Huger Smith. Watercolor.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

Old Woman Swamp is a mysterious and inspiring playground for two brothers during World War I. The narrator and his brother—like the majority of Americans at the time—lived in a rural area, where the primary source of entertainment was the outdoors.

#### About the Artwork

Medieval painter Albrecht Dürer was among the first artists to utilize watercolors, which are made of pigments ground together with gum arabic and thinned with water. In the eighteenth century, watercolors became widely available and were often used for preliminary studies for oil paintings. Watercolors came into their own with the Impressionists, who created many vibrant works of art with the bright colors. Watercolor technique usually calls for painting on a white paper surface; objects meant to be white in the final product are then simply left unpainted. Outlines and details can be added after the paper—which is stretched across a frame to prevent warping—has dried.

#### Relating Expression Skills

Students might enjoy learning how to paint with watercolors. They could then put this skill to use by portraying some local element of nature—a tree, stream, or garden.

doors. Point out that the boys' love of nature is a vital element in this story.

Students will need help to fully understand the richness of the story's **symbols** and **figurative language**. Use the **For Study and Discussion** and **Literary Elements** sections to stimulate a

deeper understanding of the story. Assist students in a careful reading of the first two paragraphs. Some may not notice that the narrator is going back in time, yet going ahead of the story.

Discuss the situations of the two brothers. Stu-

dents probably will feel pity for Doodle and want to know exactly what his physical abnormalities entail. Some may want to discuss the burdens inherent in being a big brother or sister. How do they feel about the narrator? Do they blame the narrator for Doodle's death, or do they feel pity

**6** *What does Mama mean when she says Doodle might not be "all there"?* He might be mentally handicapped.

**7** Doodle's response to narrator, a smile, indicates that he is mentally alive.

**8** *Simile.* "Like an old worn-out doll" suggests that Doodle is completely drained of physical strength after exertion.

**9** *Why does Mama press her hand against her mouth?* Probably is holding back exclamation of fear, wonder, and hope.

**10** *Simile.* "Like a doodlebug" describes look of Doodle's actions. Image is both sad and humorous.

**11** *Irony.* Narrator does, in fact, expect a great deal from Doodle.

**12** *Characterization.* Doodle is portrayed as "normal" child in that he talks constantly, is curious, and wants to go with an older brother.

**13** Because he is a child himself, narrator does not take seriously the warnings about Doodle's need to be "treated gently."

where across the fields and swamps you could see the sea. I wanted a brother. But Mama, crying, told me that even if William Armstrong lived, he would never do these things with me.

**6** He might not, she sobbed, even be "all there." He might, as long as he lived, lie on the rubber sheet in the center of the bed in the front bedroom, where the white marquissette<sup>1</sup> curtains billowed out in the afternoon sea breeze, rustling like palmetto fronds.

It was bad enough having an invalid brother, but having one who possibly was not all there was unbearable, so I began to make plans to kill him by smothering him with a pillow. However, one afternoon as I watched him, my head poked between the iron posts of the foot of the bed, he looked straight at me and grinned. I skipped through the rooms, down the echoing halls, shouting, "Mama, he smiled. He's all there! He's all there!" and he was.

When he was two, if you laid him on his stomach, he began to try to move himself, straining terribly. The doctor said that with his weak heart this strain would probably kill him, but it didn't. Trembling, he'd push himself up, turning first red, then a soft purple, and finally collapse back onto the bed like an old worn-out doll. I can still see Mama watching him, her hand pressed tight across her mouth, her eyes wide and unblinking. But he learned to crawl (it was his third winter), and we brought him out of the front bedroom, putting him on the rug before the fireplace. For the first time he became one of us.

As long as he lay all the time in bed, we called him William Armstrong, even though it was formal and sounded as if we were referring to one of our ancestors, but with his creeping around on the deerskin rug and beginning to talk, something had to be done about his

name. It was I who renamed him. When he crawled, he crawled backward, as if he were in reverse and couldn't change gears. If you called him, he'd turn around as if he were going in the other direction, then he'd back right up to you to be picked up. Crawling backward made him look like a doodlebug, so I began to call him Doodle, and in time even Mama and Daddy thought it was a better name than William Armstrong. Only Aunt Nicey disagreed. She said caul babies should be treated with special respect since they might turn out to be saints. Renaming my brother was perhaps the kindest thing I ever did for him, because nobody expects much from someone called Doodle.

Although Doodle learned to crawl, he showed no signs of walking, but he wasn't idle. He talked so much that we all quit listening to what he said. It was about this time that Daddy built him a go-cart and I had to pull him around. At first I just paraded him up and down the piazza, but then he started crying to be taken out into the yard and it ended up by my having to lug him wherever I went. If I so much as picked up my cap, he'd start crying to go with me and Mama would call from wherever she was, "Take Doodle with you."

He was a burden in many ways. The doctor had said that he mustn't get too excited, too hot, too cold, or too tired and that he must always be treated gently. A long list of don'ts went with him, all of which I ignored once we got out of the house. To discourage his coming with me, I'd run with him across the ends of the cotton rows and careen him around corners on two wheels. Sometimes I accidentally turned him over, but he never told Mama. His skin was very sensitive, and he had to wear a big straw hat whenever he went out. When the going got rough and he had to cling to the sides of the go-cart, the hat slipped all the way down over his ears. He was a sight. Finally, I

1. **marquissette** (mär'ki-zét', mär'kwí-): a sheer fabric used for curtains.

for the narrator because of the guilt he may carry? Some may decide that Doodle actually lived longer because of the rigorous development program.

could see I was licked. Doodle was my brother and he was going to cling to me forever, no matter what I did, so I dragged him across the burning cotton field to share with him the only beauty I knew, Old Woman Swamp. I pulled the go-cart through the sawtooth fern, down into the green dimness where the palmetto fronds whispered by the stream. I lifted him out and set him down in the soft rubber grass beside a tall pine. His eyes were round with wonder as he gazed about him, and his little hands began to stroke the rubber grass. Then he began to cry.

"For heaven's sake, what's the matter?" I asked, annoyed.

"It's so pretty," he said. "So pretty, pretty, pretty."

After that day Doodle and I often went down into Old Woman Swamp. I would gather wildflowers, wild violets, honeysuckle, yellow jasmine, snakeflowers, and water lilies, and with wire grass we'd weave them into necklaces and crowns. We'd bedeck ourselves with our handiwork and loll about thus beautified, beyond the touch of the everyday world. Then when the slanted rays of the sun burned orange in the tops of the pines, we'd drop our jewels into the stream and watch them float away toward the sea.

There is within me (and with sadness I have watched it in others) a knot of cruelty borne by the stream of love, much as our blood sometimes bears the seed of our destruction, and at times I was mean to Doodle. One day I took him up to the barn loft and showed him his casket, telling him how we all had believed he would die. It was covered with a film of Paris green<sup>2</sup> sprinkled to kill the rats, and screech owls had built a nest inside it.

Doodle studied the mahogany box for a long time, then said, "It's not mine."

2. **Paris green:** a poisonous powder used as a preservative and as an insecticide.

"It is," I said. "And before I'll help you down from the loft, you're going to have to touch it."

"I won't touch it," he said sullenly.

"Then I'll leave you here by yourself," I threatened, and made as if I were going down.

Doodle was frightened of being left. "Don't go leave me, Brother," he cried, and he leaned toward the coffin. His hand, trembling, reached out, and when he touched the casket he screamed. A screech owl flapped out of the box into our faces, scaring us and covering us with Paris green. Doodle was paralyzed, so I put him on my shoulder and carried him down the ladder, and even when we were outside in the bright sunshine, he clung to me, crying, "Don't leave me. Don't leave me."

19 When Doodle was five years old, I was embarrassed at having a brother of that age who couldn't walk, so I set out to teach him. We were down in Old Woman Swamp and it was spring and the sick-sweet smell of bay flowers hung everywhere like a mournful song. "I'm going to teach you to walk, Doodle," I said.

20 He was sitting comfortably on the soft grass, leaning back against the pine. "Why?" he asked.

I hadn't expected such an answer. "So I won't have to haul you around all the time."

"I can't walk, Brother," he said.

"Who says so?" I demanded.

21 "Mama, the doctor—everybody."

"Oh, you can walk," I said, and I took him by the arms and stood him up. He collapsed onto the grass like a half-empty flour sack. It was as if he had no bones in his little legs.

"Don't hurt me, Brother," he warned.

"Shut up. I'm not going to hurt you. I'm going to teach you to walk." I heaved him up again, and again he collapsed.

This time he did not lift his face up out of

14

**Setting.** In addition to offering few opportunities for entertainment, isolated cotton farm offers little in way of beauty.

15

**Characterization.** Doodle has intense appreciation for beauties of nature.

16

*What does the narrator mean by cruelty "borne by the stream of love"? People sometimes hurt loved ones because of their own weaknesses and expectations.*

17

**Figurative language.** Suggests people carry within them what will destroy them if it is allowed to flower.

18

*Does the narrator try to excuse his actions in this incident? No; he says it was result of cruelty "borne by stream of love."*

19

**Characterization.** Narrator's motive for teaching Doodle to walk is selfish.

20

**Simile.** "Like a mournful song" suggests sadness in midst of beauty.

21

Doodle has accepted prediction of those in authority; later, his efforts suggest he puts higher faith in his brother.



22

**How can pride be both wonderful and terrible?** Can result in actions that are good in some cases, evil in others.

23

**Metaphor.** Functions to reveal narrator's earlier innocence. He does not understand destructive nature of pride. Echoes previous comment ("the seeds of our destruction").

24

Narrator uses Doodle's own pride as means to persuade him to keep trying.

25

**Simile.** "Like a ringing bell" suggests shrill, happy laughter.

26

**How is hope personified?** Portrayed as having ability to hide and perch in tree like animal or human. Has become visible, stronger.

27

"Cotton-picking time" is early fall.

28

**Simile.** "Like holding your breath" suggests boys' intense excitement at idea of "miracle" of Doodle walking.

29

**Allusion.** Refers to Christ's Resurrection; Biblical prediction of Resurrection of elect on Judgment Day.

30

**Characterization.** Narrator's joy at revealing secret is overcome by sense of guilt.

the rubber grass. "I just can't do it. Let's make honeysuckle wreaths."

"Oh yes you can, Doodle," I said. "All you got to do is try. Now come on," and I hauled him up once more.

It seemed so hopeless from the beginning that it's a miracle I didn't give up. But all of us must have something or someone to be proud of, and Doodle had become mine. I did not know then that pride is a wonderful, terrible thing, a seed that bears two vines, life and death. Every day that summer we went to the pine beside the stream of Old Woman Swamp, and I put him on his feet at least a hundred times each afternoon. Occasionally I too became discouraged because it didn't seem as if he was trying, and I would say, "Doodle, don't you want to learn to walk?"

He'd nod his head, and I'd say, "Well, if you don't keep trying, you'll never learn." Then I'd paint for him a picture of us as old men, white-haired, him with a long white beard and me still pulling him around in the go-cart. This never failed to make him try again.

Finally one day, after many weeks of practicing, he stood alone for a few seconds. When he fell, I grabbed him in my arms and hugged him, our laughter pealing through the swamp like a ringing bell. Now we knew it could be done. Hope no longer hid in the dark palmetto thicket but perched like a cardinal in the lacy toothbrush tree, brilliantly visible. "Yes, yes," I cried, and he cried it too, and the grass beneath us was soft and the smell of the swamp was sweet.

With success so imminent, we decided not to tell anyone until he could actually walk. Each day, barring rain, we sneaked into Old Woman Swamp, and by cotton-picking time Doodle was ready to show what he could do. He still wasn't able to walk far, but we could wait no longer. Keeping a nice secret is very hard to do, like holding your breath. We chose to re-

veal all on October eighth, Doodle's sixth birthday, and for weeks ahead we mooned around the house, promising everybody a most spectacular surprise. Aunt Nicey said that, after so much talk, if we produced anything less tremendous than the Resurrection, she was going to be disappointed.

At breakfast on our chosen day, when Mama, Daddy, and Aunt Nicey were in the dining room, I brought Doodle to the door in the go-cart just as usual and had them turn their backs, making them cross their hearts and hope to die if they peeked. I helped Doodle up, and when he was standing alone I let them look. There wasn't a sound as Doodle walked slowly across the room and sat down at his place at the table. Then Mama began to cry and ran over to him, hugging him and kissing him. Daddy hugged him too, so I went to Aunt Nicey, who was thanks-praying in the doorway, and began to waltz her around. We danced together quite well until she came down on my big toe with her brogans,<sup>3</sup> hurting me so badly I thought I was crippled for life.

Doodle told them it was I who had taught him to walk, so everyone wanted to hug me, and I began to cry.

"What are you crying for?" asked Daddy, but I couldn't answer. They did not know that I did it for myself; that pride, whose slave I was, spoke to me louder than all their voices, and that Doodle walked only because I was ashamed of having a crippled brother.

Within a few months Doodle had learned to walk well and his go-cart was put up in the barn loft (it's still there) beside his little mahogany coffin. Now, when we roamed off together, resting often, we never turned back until our destination had been reached, and to help pass the time, we took up lying. From the beginning Doodle was a terrible liar and he got

3. **brogans** (brō'ganz): ankle-high work shoes.

me in the habit. Had anyone stopped to listen  
31 to us, we would have been sent off to Dix Hill.

My lies were scary, involved, and usually  
pointless, but Doodle's were twice as crazy.  
32 People in his stories all had wings and flew  
33 wherever they wanted to go. His favorite lie  
was about a boy named Peter who had a pet  
peacock with a ten-foot tail. Peter wore a  
golden robe that glittered so brightly that  
when he walked through the sunflowers they  
turned away from the sun to face him. When  
Peter was ready to go to sleep, the peacock  
spread his magnificent tail, enfolding the boy  
gently like a closing go-to-sleep flower, burying  
him in the gloriously iridescent,<sup>4</sup> rustling vor-  
tex.<sup>5</sup> Yes, I must admit it. Doodle could beat  
me lying.

Doodle and I spent lots of time thinking  
about our future. We decided that when we  
were grown we'd live in Old Woman Swamp  
and pick dog-tongue for a living. Beside the  
34 stream, he planned, we'd build us a house of  
35 whispering leaves and the swamp birds would  
be our chickens. All day long (when we weren't  
gathering dog-tongue) we'd swing through the  
cypresses on the rope vines, and if it rained  
we'd huddle beneath an umbrella tree and play  
stickfrog. Mama and Daddy could come and  
live with us if they wanted to. He even came up  
with the idea that he could marry Mama and I  
could marry Daddy. Of course, I was old  
enough to know this wouldn't work out, but  
the picture he painted was so beautiful and se-  
rene that all I could do was whisper Yes, yes.

Once I had succeeded in teaching Doodle to  
walk, I began to believe in my own infallibility  
and I prepared a terrific development pro-  
gram for him, unknown to Mama and Daddy,

4. **iridescent** (ir'ə-dēs'ənt): rainbowlike.

5. **vortex**: something that draws everything into its center  
like a whirlpool.

of course. I would teach him to run, to swim, to  
climb trees, and to fight. He, too, now believed  
in my infallibility, so we set the deadline for  
these accomplishments less than a year away,  
when, it had been decided, Doodle could start  
to school.

That winter we didn't make much progress,  
for I was in school and Doodle suffered from  
one bad cold after another. But when spring  
came, rich and warm, we raised our sights  
again. Success lay at the end of summer like a  
pot of gold, and our campaign got off to a  
good start. On hot days, Doodle and I went  
down to Horsehead Landing and I gave him  
swimming lessons or showed him how to row a  
boat. Sometimes we descended into the cool  
greenness of Old Woman Swamp and climbed  
the rope vines or boxed scientifically beneath  
36 the pine where he had learned to walk. Prom-  
ise hung about us like the leaves, and wherever  
we looked, ferns unfurled and birds broke into  
song.

37 That summer, the summer of 1918, was  
blighted. In May and June there was no rain  
and the crops withered, curled up, then died  
under the thirsty sun. One morning in July a  
hurricane came out of the east, tipping over  
the oaks in the yard and splitting the limbs of  
the elm trees. That afternoon it roared back  
out of the west, blew the fallen oaks around,  
snapping their roots and tearing them out of  
the earth like a hawk at the entrails of a  
chicken. Cotton bolls were wrenched from the  
stalks and lay like green walnuts in the valleys  
between the rows, while the cornfield leaned  
over uniformly so that the tassels touched the  
ground. Doodle and I followed Daddy out into  
the cotton field, where he stood, shoulders sag-  
ging, surveying the ruin. When his chin sank  
down onto his chest, we were frightened, and  
Doodle slipped his hand into mine. Suddenly  
Daddy straightened his shoulders, raised a  
giant knuckly fist, and with a voice that seemed

31

Dix Hill is probably name used for  
local mental hospital; suggests  
outrageous quality of their sto-  
ries.

32

*What do Doodle's stories sug-  
gest about him?* Perhaps desire  
for increased mobility without  
the tremendous effort he must  
make.

33

**Characterization.** Doodle's  
"lies" also reveal he is a child of  
unusual imagination and love of  
the beautiful.

34

**Dog-tongue:** plant having  
tongue-shaped leaves, some-  
times used in salads and in medi-  
cines.

35

In Old Woman Swamp, the  
brothers dream dreams of para-  
dise, of their own Garden of  
Eden.

36

Growing, unfolding plants sug-  
gest boys' happiness and hope  
for Doodle's growing strength  
and abilities.

37

**Foreshadowing.** Blighted sum-  
mer, in which plant growth is  
replaced by decay and ruin, fore-  
shadows tragic ending of story.

38

*What is the boys' response to their father's swearing? Why?* The boys feel reassured because they know their father has not lost fighting spirit.

39

**Allusion.** Family is discussing World War I battles.

40

**Setting.** Narrator returns to time first mentioned in story by echoing phrase "clove of seasons."

41

**Metaphor.** "Pot of gold" suggests hope is not realistic—there is no pot of gold at end of rainbow.

42

*Which details show that the older brother is demanding too much?* Doodle's physical response: red face, glazed eyes, collapsing.

43

**Dog days:** period of hot, sultry weather between early July and early September, named for Dog Star, Sirius.

44

**Allusion.** Refers to story of Hansel and Gretel who, because they marked the trail with crumbs, expected to be able to retrace their path through the woods.

45

Signs of nature believed to predict such things as weather and best times for planting crops.

38 to rumble out of the earth itself began cursing heaven, hell, the weather, and the Republican Party. Doodle and I, prodding each other and giggling, went back to the house, knowing that 44 everything would be all right.

39 And during that summer, strange names were heard through the house: Château Thierry, Amiens, Soissons, and in her blessing at the supper table, Mama once said, "And bless the Pearsons, whose boy Joe was lost at Belleau Wood."<sup>6</sup>

40 So we came to that clove of seasons. School was only a few weeks away, and Doodle was far behind schedule. He could barely clear the 45 ground when climbing up the rope vines and his swimming was certainly not passable. We decided to double our efforts, to make that last 41 drive and reach our pot of gold. I made him swim until he turned blue and row until he couldn't lift an oar. Wherever we went, I purposely walked fast, and although he kept up, 42 his face turned red and his eyes became glazed. Once, he could go no further, so he collapsed on the ground and began to cry.

"Aw, come on, Doodle," I urged. "You can do it. Do you want to be different from everybody else when you start school?"

"Does it make any difference?"

"It certainly does," I said. "Now, come on," and I helped him up.

43 As we slipped through dog days, Doodle began to look feverish, and Mama felt his forehead, asking him if he felt ill. At night he didn't sleep well, and sometimes he had nightmares, crying out until I touched him and said, "Wake up, Doodle. Wake up."

It was Saturday noon, just a few days before school was to start. I should have already admitted defeat, but my pride wouldn't let me. The excitement of our program had now been

gone for weeks, but still we kept on with a tired doggedness. It was too late to turn back, for we had both wandered too far into a net of expectations and had left no crumbs behind.

Daddy, Mama, Doodle, and I were seated at the dining-room table having lunch. It was a hot day, with all the windows and doors open in case a breeze should come. In the kitchen Aunt Nicey was humming softly. After a long silence, Daddy spoke. "It's so calm, I wouldn't be surprised if we had a storm this afternoon."

"I haven't heard a rain frog," said Mama, who believed in signs, as she served the bread around the table.

"I did," declared Doodle. "Down in the swamp."

"He didn't," I said contrarily.

"You did, eh?" said Daddy, ignoring my denial.

"I certainly did," Doodle reiterated, scowling at me over the top of his iced-tea glass, and we were quiet again.

Suddenly, from out in the yard, came a strange croaking noise. Doodle stopped eating, with a piece of bread poised ready for his mouth, his eyes popped round like two blue buttons. "What's that?" he whispered.

I jumped up, knocking over my chair, and had reached the door when Mama called, "Pick up the chair, sit down again, and say excuse me."

By the time I had done this, Doodle had excused himself and had slipped out into the yard. He was looking up into the bleeding tree. "It's a great big red bird!" he called.

The bird croaked loudly again, and Mama and Daddy came out into the yard. We shaded our eyes with our hands against the hazy glare of the sun and peered up through the still leaves. On the topmost branch a bird the size of a chicken, with scarlet feathers and long legs, was perched precariouly. Its wings hung

6. **Château Thierry** (shá-tō' tyě-rě'), **Amiens** (a-myaN'), **Soissons** (swa-sōN') . . . **Belleau** (bēl-ō') **Wood**: places in France where battles took place during World War I.





down loosely, and as we watched, a feather dropped away and floated slowly down through the green leaves.

"It's not even frightened of us," Mama said.

"It looks tired," Daddy added. "Or maybe sick."

Doodle's hands were clasped at his throat, and I had never seen him stand still so long. "What is it?" he asked.

Daddy shook his head. "I don't know, maybe it's——"

At that moment the bird began to flutter, **49** but the wings were uncoordinated, and amid much flapping and a spray of flying feathers, it tumbled down, bumping through the limbs of the bleeding tree and landing at our feet with a thud. Its long, graceful neck jerked twice into an S, then straightened out, and the bird was still. A white veil came over the eyes and the long white beak unhinged. Its legs were crossed and its clawlike feet were delicately

curved at rest. Even death did not mar its **47** grace, for it lay on the earth like a broken vase of red flowers, and we stood around it, awed by its exotic beauty.

"It's dead," Mama said.

"What is it?" Doodle repeated.

"Go bring me the bird book," said Daddy.

I ran into the house and brought back the bird book. As we watched, Daddy thumbed through its pages. "It's a scarlet ibis," he said, pointing to a picture. "It lives in the tropics—South America to Florida. A storm must have brought it here."

**48** Sadly, we all looked back at the bird. A scarlet ibis! How many miles it had traveled to die like this, in *our* yard, beneath the bleeding tree.

"Let's finish lunch," Mama said, nudging us back toward the dining room.

"I'm not hungry," said Doodle, and he knelt down beside the ibis.

"We've got peach cobbler for dessert," Mama tempted from the doorway.

Doodle remained kneeling. "I'm going to bury him."

"Don't you dare touch him," Mama warned. "There's no telling what disease he might have had."

"All right," said Doodle. "I won't."

Daddy, Mama, and I went back to the dining-room table, but we watched Doodle through the open door. He took out a piece of string from his pocket and, without touching the ibis, looped one end around its neck.

Slowly, while singing softly "Shall We Gather at the River," he carried the bird around to the front yard and dug a hole in the flower garden, next to the petunia bed. Now we were watching him through the front window, but he didn't know it. His awkwardness at digging the hole with a shovel whose handle was twice as long as he was made us laugh, and we covered our mouths with our hands so he wouldn't hear.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The ibis is a wading bird which feeds mainly on fish and other marine animals. The species inhabits Africa, Australia, and tropical parts of Asia, North America, and South America. The white and black ibis was the sacred bird of the Egyptians, probably because its appearance signaled the rising of the Nile River and the beginning of planting season. The feathers of the scarlet ibis were once used to decorate hats, but now the variety is almost extinct.

### 46

**Foreshadowing.** The fall of ibis foreshadows Doodle's fall.

### 47

**Simile.** "Like a broken vase of red flowers" emphasizes bird's beauty even after death.

### 48

**Symbol.** The rare ibis symbolizes the exceptional Doodle.

### 49

The hymn "Shall We Gather at the River," which Doodle sings as funeral dirge, reflects dreams of wonderful afterlife.

50

**Foreshadowing.** Aunt Nicey's prediction is based purely on superstition, yet it foreshadows coming tragedy.

51

**Rail:** small, wading bird which lives in marshes; characterized by its harsh cry.

52

**Imagery.** Black clouds, lightning, roaring thunder, darkness, fleeing birds create ominous atmosphere.

53

**How does the older brother respond to Doodle's fall? Why?** Older brother is unsympathetic; seems to blame Doodle for failure. Fierce pride and spite will not allow him to comfort Doodle.

54

**Simile.** Ironic in that Roman candles, usually signs of celebration, are used in image of destruction. Coupled with storm and Doodle's plight, image is ominous.

55

**Imagery.** "Red nightshade bush" recalls image of ibis; foreshadows image of Doodle's blood.

When Doodle came into the dining room, he found us seriously eating our cobbler. He was pale and lingered just inside the screen door. "Did you get the scarlet ibis buried?" asked Daddy.

Doodle didn't speak but nodded his head.

"Go wash your hands, and then you can have some peach cobbler," said Mama.

"I'm not hungry," he said.

50 "Dead birds is bad luck," said Aunt Nicey, poking her head from the kitchen door. "Specially red dead birds!"

As soon as I had finished eating, Doodle and I hurried off to Horsehead Landing. Time was short, and Doodle still had a long way to go if he was going to keep up with the other boys when he started school. The sun, gilded with the yellow cast of autumn, still burned fiercely, but the dark green woods through which we passed were shady and cool. When we reached the landing, Doodle said he was too tired to swim, so we got into a skiff and floated down the creek with the tide. Far off in the marsh a rail was scolding, and over on the beach locusts were singing in the myrtle trees. Doodle did not speak and kept his head turned away, letting one hand trail limply in the water.

After we had drifted a long way, I put the oars in place and made Doodle row back 52 against the tide. Black clouds began to gather in the southwest, and he kept watching them, trying to pull the oars a little faster. When we reached Horsehead Landing, lightning was playing across half the sky and thunder roared out, hiding even the sound of the sea. The sun disappeared and darkness descended, almost 55 like night. Flocks of marsh crows flew by, heading inland to their roosting trees, and two egrets, squawking, arose from the oyster-rock shallows and careened away.

Doodle was both tired and frightened, and when he stepped from the skiff he collapsed onto the mud, sending an armada of fiddler

crabs rustling off into the marsh grass. I helped him up, and as he wiped the mud off his trousers, he smiled at me ashamedly. He had failed and we both knew it, so we started back home, racing the storm. We never spoke (What are the words that can solder cracked pride?), but I knew he was watching me, watching for a sign of mercy. The lightning was near now, and from fear he walked so close behind me he kept stepping on my heels. The faster I walked, the faster he walked, so I began to run. The rain was coming, roaring through the pines, and then, like a bursting Roman candle, a gum tree ahead of us was shattered by a bolt of lightning. When the deafening peal of thunder had died, and in the moment before the rain arrived, I heard Doodle, who had fallen behind, cry out, "Brother, Brother, don't leave me! Don't leave me!"

The knowledge that Doodle's and my plans had come to naught was bitter, and that streak of cruelty within me awakened. I ran as fast as I could, leaving him far behind with a wall of rain dividing us. The drops stung my face like nettles, and the wind flared the wet, glistening leaves of the bordering trees. Soon I could hear his voice no more.

I hadn't run too far before I became tired, and the flood of childish spite evanesced<sup>7</sup> as well. I stopped and waited for Doodle. The sound of rain was everywhere, but the wind had died and it fell straight down in parallel paths like ropes hanging from the sky. As I waited, I peered through the downpour, but no one came. Finally I went back and found him huddled beneath a red nightshade bush beside the road. He was sitting on the ground, his face buried in his arms, which were resting on his drawn-up knees. "Let's go, Doodle," I said.

He didn't answer, so I placed my hand on his

7. **evanesced** (ěv'ə-něsd'): vanished.

forehead and lifted his head. Limply, he fell backwards onto the earth. He had been bleeding from the mouth, and his neck and the front of his shirt were stained a brilliant red.

"Doodle! Doodle!" I cried, shaking him, but there was no answer but the ropy rain. He lay very awkwardly, with his head thrown far back, making his vermilion neck appear unusually long and slim. His little legs, bent sharply at the knees, had never before seemed so fragile, so thin.

I began to weep, and the tear-blurred vision in red before me looked very familiar. "Doodle!" I screamed above the pounding storm and threw my body to the earth above his. For a long long time, it seemed forever, I lay there crying, sheltering my fallen scarlet ibis from the heresy of rain.

### Reading Check

1. Why isn't Doodle given a name immediately after his birth?
2. How does the narrator discover that the baby is "all there"?
3. What prompts the narrator to rename his brother "Doodle"?
4. What secret is revealed on Doodle's sixth birthday?
5. What does Doodle do with the scarlet ibis?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The narrator in this story is presumably an adult recalling certain events in his childhood. What changes noted in the opening paragraphs indicate that a considerable amount of time has passed?

2. The narrator says that his brother, Doodle, was "a nice crazy, like someone you meet in your dreams." **a.** What special gifts did Doodle have? **b.** What were some of the special things the brothers did together?

3. The narrator speaks of having "a knot of cruelty borne by the stream of love." **a.** What does he mean? **b.** How does the cruelty manifest itself in his treatment of Doodle? **c.** How does he show his love for Doodle?

4. We are told that the summer of 1918 was "blighted." How do the events of that summer foreshadow Doodle's death?

5. The scarlet ibis in this story is a **symbol**. It stands for itself but also suggests a wider meaning. **a.** In what way does Doodle resemble the scarlet ibis? **b.** How do you know that he identifies with the bird?

6. This story takes place in an area near the sea that is lush with vegetation. **a.** How does the narrator make us aware of the growth and death of plant life? **b.** What is the symbolic significance of Doodle's death at the end of the summer?

7. Doodle shows a great deal of courage and strength of purpose in trying to overcome his limitations. How does this determination of spirit make his story heartening as well as sad?

### Literary Elements

#### Figurative Language

When writers choose to state a fact or an idea directly, they use **literal language**. Quite often, however, writers decide that an indirect statement is more effective than a direct statement. They then use **figurative language**. Compare these statements:

He collapsed onto the grass weakly.

He collapsed onto the grass like a half-empty flour sack.

56

**Symbol.** Doodle's form resembles that of scarlet ibis.

### READING CHECK

1. Family believes he will die (p. 154).
2. Baby smiles at him (p. 156).
3. He crawls backward (p. 156).
4. Doodle can walk (p. 158).
5. Buries it (p. 161).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Bleeding tree is replaced by grindstone. Flower garden has also changed.

2a. Strong appreciation of nature, determined spirit, talent for telling "lies." 2b. Spent time outdoors; worked on development program.

3a. Love has perverse streak that causes a person at times to be cruel to one he or she loves.

3b. Makes him touch casket; pushes Doodle hard in program; makes him row against tide; does not show mercy after failure; runs away from Doodle.

3c. Takes him places, teaches and helps him, weeps over his dead body.

4. Crops are ruined, oaks are felled by storm, and Pearson boy dies in war.

5a. At birth and death, Doodle's body is red; Doodle, like ibis, is different, rare; words "tired" and "sick" could describe both bird and Doodle. 5b. Doodle buries bird and is later uncommunicative and seems tired.

6a. Describes trees and flowers at different seasons and after storm. 6b. Summer is blighted.

7. Responses will vary. Reader may admire Doodle's determined spirit and be saddened by his limitations.



## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1a. That the oriole's empty nest sways like rocking cradle suggests that bird has just left nest.

1b. When baby falls back onto bed, he resembles a small, limp, lifeless object.

1c. His crawling movements are involuntary, uncontrollable like the movements of vehicle that is going backward because driver cannot change gears to make it go forward.

1d. Like buttons, boy's eyes are round and blue.

1e. The broken vase suggests death of beautiful, delicate red bird.

2. "Clove" suggests division, a time between seasons.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1a. *Bedeck*: to adorn in a showy fashion; cover with decorations.

1b. *Imminent*: about to occur.

1c. *Infallibility*: incapability of making error.

1d. *Doggedness*: stubbornness.

The second sentence is an example of figurative language. It makes us think of a person in terms of something that is shapeless and lifeless.

Writers frequently use figurative language to give emphasis to ideas and to make their style vivid. One kind of figurative language is the **simile**. A simile expresses a comparison between two unlike things. A word such as *like* or *as* is used to suggest the similarity.

### 1 Explain the comparisons expressed in each of these similes:

- a . . . the oriole nest in the elm was untenanted and rocked back and forth *like an empty cradle*.
- b Trembling, he'd push himself up, . . . and finally collapse back onto the bed *like an old worn-out doll*.
- c When he crawled, he crawled backward, *as if he were in reverse and couldn't change gears*.
- d . . . his eyes popped round *like two blue buttons*.
- e . . . it lay on the earth *like a broken vase of red flowers* . . .

**Metaphor** is another kind of figurative language. Like simile, metaphor compares two things that are basically different. However, a metaphor does not use connecting words to express the comparison. A metaphor identifies the two things—that is, it says that one thing is another:

Doodle . . . collapsed onto the mud, sending an armada of fiddler crabs rustling off into the marsh grass.

An *armada* is a fleet of warships, like the Spanish Armada that was sent against England in 1588. The author does not say that the crabs looked like an armada; he identifies the two things directly.

### 2 Explain the metaphor in the opening sentence of the story:

It was in the clove of seasons, summer was dead but autumn had not yet been born . . .

## CLOSURE

Ask students to tell how the **setting** of the story contributes to the mood and the events in the story.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Finding Meaning from Context

The **context** of a word refers to the words that surround it and to the total situation in which it is used. You often can use context clues to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. For example, the following sentence provides clues to the meaning of *careen*:

To discourage his coming with me, I'd run with him across the ends of the cotton rows and *careen* him around corners on two wheels.

You can visualize the go-cart moving from side to side in an uncontrolled manner and leaning sideways on two of its four wheels as it rounds a corner.

### 1 Use context clues to define the italicized words in the following passages from the story. Then check your answers in the glossary or in a dictionary.

- a We'd *bedeck* ourselves with our handiwork and loll about thus beautified, beyond the touch of the everyday world.
- b With success so *imminent*, we decided not to tell anyone until he could actually walk.
- c Once I had succeeded in teaching Doodle to walk, I began to believe in my own *infallibility*, and I prepared a terrific program for him . . .
- d The excitement of our program had now been gone for weeks, but still we kept on with a tired *doggedness*.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students write a short essay explicating the statement “all of us must have something or someone to be proud of.” Encourage them to use specific examples and **figurative language** in their essays. Alternatively, you might have stu-

dents write about a time when they had trouble keeping a “nice secret.” Invite them to go beyond retelling the events of what happened to explore their thoughts and feelings about their secret.

Some students may want to list all the flowers

mentioned in the story. Have them find books or magazines that contain pictures of the flowers and then show the pictures to the class. They could then try to re-create the garden in the story by arranging photographs, paintings, or drawings on a bulletin board.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Analyzing the Function of Setting

Setting is an important element in “The Scarlet Ibis.” Write a brief essay in which you analyze its importance to the plot and to characterization. Here are some questions to guide you in your analysis:

1. Where and when does the story take place?
2. How much time is covered?
3. Which places or scenes are of particular importance?
4. How does nature itself mirror the hopes and dreams of the characters as well as their disappointments?
5. How are the happy times of the brothers reflected in descriptions of background?
6. What is the relationship between the storms and the events in the characters’ lives?

## Descriptive Writing

### Using Specific Details in Setting

Choose a favorite place that has as many memories for you as Old Woman Swamp has for the narrator of “The Scarlet Ibis.” In one or two paragraphs, describe the setting at some specific time on a particular day—at dusk during a rainstorm, for example. Use specific details to evoke the sights, sounds, and smells associated with this place. To review the elements of effective descriptive writing, see pages 209–210.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## About the Author

### James Hurst (1922– )

James Hurst grew up in North Carolina on a farm by the sea. After studying at North Carolina State College, he served in the army during World War II. When the war ended he studied singing at the Juilliard School of Music, then continued his musical studies in Rome, Italy, where he lived for three years. Back in New York in 1951, he began a thirty-four year career in the International Department of a large bank. For a decade, in the fifties and early sixties, he also wrote, publishing several short stories and a play. His most famous short story, “The Scarlet Ibis” first appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* in July, 1960, winning their “Atlantic First” award for that year. This beautiful and moving story has been widely reprinted in high-school and college literature books as well as in short-story collections. Hurst is now retired and has moved back to North Carolina, where he lives in a small eighteenth-century town not far from the place of his birth.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

You may wish to divide the class into groups of six for prewriting activities. Have each student write in detail the response to one of the six analysis questions, using evidence in the story to support the response. Group members may then compile their findings. Such close reading and discussion should help students write their analyses.

## DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

Students should have little difficulty with this assignment if they are careful to describe in detail their favorite place at a particular moment. Inexperienced writers often write general descriptions that exclude fresh, vivid details and, as a result, fail to create a sense of mood.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to show how the language and customs of a particular region contribute to the understanding of the **setting** of the story. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the rural New Mexico **setting** of this story. You may want to discuss how the setting of a story allows the characters to develop and events to unfold as they do.

## Mana Seda

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion of the importance of **setting** to characterization.

**1** **Setting.** "Old and crumbling," "huddle," and "ruffled" show age of village in the Southwest. **Simile** that compares houses around mission to chicks around hen shows central role of religion in local lives.

**2** **Exposition.** Provides background information about life style of area's inhabitants.

**3** Use to answer study question 1, p. 172.

**4** Some visitors make pilgrimage to village hoping they will be healed of afflictions.

**5** Mission and graveyard have become historical landmarks.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 172 will give students practice in using a dictionary to find the meaning of Spanish place names.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Tell students that as they read "Mana Seda" they should keep in mind what the Virgin Mary means to the people of El Tordo and how Mana Seda herself is devoted to the Virgin Mary and later becomes associated with her image.

# Mana Seda

## FRAY ANGELICO CHAVEZ

*The characteristics of a particular region—its language and its customs—are also part of a story's setting. Note how this story depicts the customs as well as the landscape of a region in the Southwest.*

*The word Mana in the title is a short form of hermana, the Spanish word for "sister."*

- 1** Old and crumbling, the squat-built adobe mission of El Tordo sits in a hollow high up near the snow-capped Truchas.<sup>1</sup> A few clay houses huddle close to it like tawny chicks about a ruffled old hen. On one of the steep slopes, which has the peaks for a background, sleeps the ancient graveyard with all its inhabitants, or what little is left of them. The town itself is quite as lifeless during the winter months, when the few folks that live there move down to warmer levels by the Rio Grande; but when the snows have gone, except for the white crusts on the peaks, they return to herd their sheep and goats, and with them comes a stream of pious pilgrims and curious sightseers which lasts throughout the spring and summer weather.
- 3** They come to see and pray before the stoop-shouldered Virgin, people from as far south as Belen<sup>2</sup> who from some accident or some spinal or heart affliction are shoulder-bent and want to walk straight again. Others, whose faith is not so simple or who have no faith at all, have

come from many parts of the country and asked the way to El Tordo, not only to see the curiously painted Madonna in which the natives put so much faith, but to visit a single grave in a corner of the campo santo<sup>3</sup> which, they have heard, is covered in spring with a profusion of wild flowers, whereas the other sunken ones are bare altogether, or at the most sprinkled only with sagebrush and tumbleweed. And, of course, they want to hear from the lips of some old inhabitant the history of the town and the church, the painting and the grave, and particularly of Mana Seda.

No one knows, or cares to know, when the village was born. It is more thrilling to say, with the natives, that the first settlers came up from the Santa Clara valley long before the railroad came to New Mexico, when the Indians of Nambé and Taos still used bows and arrows and obsidian clubs; when it took a week to go to Santa Fe, which looked no different from the other northern towns at the time, only somewhat bigger. After the men had allotted the scant farming land among themselves, and

1. **Truchas** (trōō'chas): mountains in New Mexico, northeast of Santa Fe.

2. **Belen** (bē-lēn'): a village in western New Mexico, on the Rio Grande.

3. **campo santo** (kām'pō sǎn'tō): cemetery.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 16 / Selection Test 16 / Reading Check 16 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 16



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Hunchbacked, widowed, Mana Seda moved to the village of El Tordo with the first settlers. The villagers found a place for her near their newly built church. Now old, she has served the church for many years—sweeping, ringing the bells,

and gathering flowers for the young May queens to present in honor of the Virgin. Her only sorrow is that the church has no image of the Virgin. But for one so faithful, sometimes the most unexpected good things can occur.

## PRESENTATION

Concentrate discussion first on the **setting**—the physical characteristics of the land and the language and customs of the people of El Tordo. On the chalkboard, write three headings—Place, Language, and Customs. Consider the subjects

each family raised its adobe hut of one or two rooms to begin with, they set to making adobes for a church that would shoulder above their homes as a guardian parent. On a high, untillable slope they marked out as their God's acre a plot which was to be surrounded by an adobe wall. It was not long before large pines from the forest nearby had been carved into beams and corbels<sup>4</sup> and hoisted into their places on the thick walls. The women themselves mud-plastered the tall walls outside with their bare hands; within they made them a soft white<sup>5</sup> with a lime mixture applied with the woolly side of sheepskins.

The padre, whose name the people do not remember, was so pleased with the building, and with the crudely wrought reredos<sup>5</sup> behind the altar, that he promised to get at his own expense a large hand-painted *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*<sup>6</sup> to hang in the middle of the *retablo*.<sup>7</sup> But this had to wait until the next traders' ox-drawn caravan left Santa Fe for Chihuahua<sup>8</sup> in Old Mexico and came back again. It would take years, perhaps, if there was no such painting ready and it must be made to order.

With these first settlers of El Tordo had come an old woman who had no relatives in the place they had left. For no apparent reason she had chosen to cast her lot with the emigrants, and they had willingly brought her along in one of their wooden-wheeled *carretas*,<sup>9</sup> had even built her a room in the protective shadow of the new church. For that had been her work before, sweeping the house of God, ringing the Angelus<sup>10</sup> morning, noon and

night, adorning the altar with lace cloths and flowers, when there were flowers. She even persuaded the padre, when the first of May came around, to start an ancient custom prevalent in her place of origin: that of having little girls dressed as queens and their maids-in-waiting present bunches of flowers to the Virgin Mary every evening in May. She could not wait for the day when the Guadalupe picture would arrive.

They called her *Mana Seda*, "Sister Silk." Nobody knew why; they had known her by no other name. The women thought she had got it long ago for being always so neat, or maybe because she embroidered so many altar cloths. But the men said it was because she looked so much like a silk-spinning spider; for she was very much humpbacked—so bent forward that she could look up only sideways and with effort. She always wore black, a black shiny dress and black shawl with long leglike fringes and, despite her age and deformity, she walked about quite swiftly and noiselessly. "Yes," they said, "like the black widow spider."

Being the cause of the May devotions at El Tordo, she took it upon herself to provide the happy girls with flowers for the purpose. The geraniums which she grew in her window were used up the first day, as also those that other women had tended in their own homes. So she scoured the slopes around the village for wild daisies and Indian paint brush, usually returning in the late afternoon with a shawlful to spill at the eager children's feet. Toward the end of May she had to push deeper into the forest, whence she came back with her tireless, short-stepped spider-run, her arms and shawl laden with wild iris and cosmos, verbenas and mariposa lilies from the pine shadows.

This she did year after year, even after the little "queens" of former Mays got married and new tots grew up to wear their veils. Mana Seda's one regret was that the image of the

6

**Adobe:** kind of brick made of clay and dried in the sun.

7

Clue to religious priority of people provided in fact that they immediately built church after building homes.

8

Mana Seda is introduced as an old woman; villagers are kindly toward her and provide her with home.

9

**Characterization.** Religion is the focus of Mana Seda's life. She devotes her time to serving God by doing small tasks for the church.

10

**What do contrasting interpretations of her name reveal?** Sympathetic nature of village women and realistic outlook of village men.

11

**Simile.** Men's comparison of Mana Seda to black widow spider is based solely on physical appearance rather than on habits of black widow spiders.

12

Mana Seda is happy with her lot in life; she regrets only that painting of Virgin Mary has not come to adorn church.

4. **corbels** (kôr'bêlz): brackets used for support.

5. **reredos** (rîr'dôs): a screen or structure behind the altar.

6. **Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe:** Our Lady of Guadalupe (the Virgin).

7. **retablo:** a retable, a shelf or ledge for holding altar ornaments.

8. **Chihuahua** (chî-wâ'wâ, -wə): a state in northern Mexico.

9. **carretas** (kâ-râ'tās): long, narrow carts.

10. **Angelus** (ân'jə-ləs): a bell calling people to prayer.

one at a time, and have students call out items from the story to list under each heading. Under *Place*, include any references to the geographic location and physical features of the land. Under *Language*, include words and expressions that are clearly Spanish or Mexican in origin. Under

*Customs*, include rituals relating to the church. The completed list will give students a clear picture of the *setting*.

Next, have students consider the character of Mana Seda. Are they suspicious of her at first? Why? (Students may mention her mysterious

background and looks and the fact that people compare her to a black widow spider.) Do students feel differently about her at the end of the story? Why? (Students may cite her devotion to the church and unhappy childhood as reasons for increased sympathy.)

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Rituals such as the one described in the story are common to many cultures. Because spring is the time for the planting of crops, many of these rituals and celebrations are performed in the month of May. Students might research and report on the spring celebrations of various cultures, giving information about the origin of the custom.

13

Comanches and Apaches are tribes of North American Indians that fought settlers for control of land.

14

Snow serves to protect seeds of wildflowers and other plants from a killing frost.

15

**Point of view.** Narrator tells Mana Seda's thoughts as she searches for flowers; limited omniscient point of view.

16

**What are the "forest giants"? What purpose does this metaphor serve?** The "forest giants" are tall trees. The metaphor emphasizes Mana Seda's small, spidery body and suggests her helplessness in the dark forest.

17

**Imagery.** Threatening storm described through sound images, such as "rumblings," "hiss and whine," "exploded," and visual images, such as "blinding bluish light," "dark boles."



Virgin of Guadalupe had not come, had been lost on the way when the Comanches or Apaches attacked and destroyed the Chihuahua-Santa Fe ox-train.

One year in May (it was two days before the close of the month), when the people were already whispering among themselves that Mana Seda was so old she must die soon, or else last forever, she was seen hurrying into the forest early in the morning, to avail herself of all the daylight possible, for she had to go far into the wooded canyons this time. At the closing services of May there was to be not one queen but a number of them with their attendants. Many more flowers were needed for this, and the year had been a bad one for flowers, since little snow had fallen the winter before.

Mana Seda found few blooms in her old haunts, here and there an aster with half of its petals missing or drought-toasted, or a faded

columbine fast wilting in the cool but moisture-less shade. But she must find enough flowers; otherwise the good heavenly Mother would have a sad and colorless farewell this May. On and on she shuttled in between the trunks of spruce and fir, which grew thicker and taller and closer-set as the canyon grew narrower. Farther up she heard the sound of trickling water; surely the purple iris and freckled lily flames would be rioting there, fresh and without number. She was not disappointed, and without pausing to recover her breath, began lustily to snap off the long, luscious stems and lay them on her shawl, spread out on the little meadow. Her haste was prompted by the darkness closing in through the evergreens, now turning blacker and blacker, not with approaching dusk, but with the smoky pall of thunderheads that had swallowed up the patches of blue among the tops of the forest giants.

Far away arose rumblings that grew swiftly louder and nearer. The great trees, which always whispered to her even on quiet, sunny days, began to hiss and whine angrily at the unseen wind that swayed them and swung their arms like maidens unwilling to be kissed or danced with. And then a deafening sound exploded nearby with a blinding bluish light. Others followed, now on the right or on the left, now before or behind, as Mana Seda, who had thrown her flower-weighted mantle on her arched back, started to run—in which direction she knew not, for the rain was slashing down in sheets that blurred the dark boles and boulders all around her.

At last she fell, whimpering prayers to the holy Virgin with a water-filled mouth that choked her. Of a sudden, sunlight began to fall instead between the towering trees, now quiet and dripping with emeralds and sapphires. The storm had passed by, the way spring rains in the Truchas Mountains do, as suddenly as it

had come. In a clearing not far ahead, Mana Seda saw a little adobe hut. On its one chimney

18 stood a wisp of smoke, like a white feather. Still clutching her heavy, rain-soaked shawl, she ran to it and knocked at the door, which was opened by an astonished young man with a short, sharp knife in his hand.

"I thought the mountain's bowels where the springs come from had burst," she was telling the youth, who meanwhile stirred a pot of brown beans that hung with a pail of coffee over the flames in the corner fireplace. "But

19 our most holy Lady saved me when I prayed to her, *gracias a Dios*.<sup>11</sup> The lightning and the water stopped, and I saw her flying above me.

20 She had a piece of sky for a veil, and her skirt was like the beautiful red roses at her feet. She showed me your house."

Her host tried to hide his amusement by taking up his work again, a head he had been carving on the end of a small log. She saw that he was no different from the grown boys of El Tordo, dark and somewhat lean-bodied in his plain homespun. All about, against the wall and in niches, could be seen several other images, wooden and gaily colored *bultos*,<sup>12</sup> and more *santos*<sup>13</sup> painted on pieces of wood or hide. Mana Seda guessed that this must be the

21 young stranger's trade, and grew more confident because of it. As she spread out her shawl to dry before the open fire, her load of flowers rolled out soggly on the bare earth floor. Catching his questioning stare, she told him what they were for, and about the church and the people of El Tordo.

"But that makes me think of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe," he said. "Remember how the Indian Juan Diego filled his blanket with roses, as Mary most holy told him to

do? And how, when he let down his *tilma*<sup>14</sup> before the bishop, out fell the roses, and on it was the miraculous picture of the Mother of God?"

Yes, she knew the story well; and she told him about the painting of the Guadalupe which the priest of El Tordo had ordered brought from Mexico and which was lost on the way. Perhaps, if the padre knew of this young man's ability, he would pay him for making one. Did he ever do work for churches? And what was his name?

"My name is Esquipula," he replied. "Sí, I have done work for the Church. I made the *retablo* of 'San Francisco' for his church in Ranchos de Taos, and also the 'Cristo' for Santa Cruz. The 'Guadalupe' at San Juan, I painted it. I will gladly paint another for your chapel."

22 He stopped all of a sudden, shut his eyes tight, and then quickly leaned toward the bent old figure who was helping herself to some coffee. "Why do you not let me paint one right now—on your shawl!"

She could not answer at first. Such a thing was unheard of. Besides, she had no other *tápalo*<sup>15</sup> to wear. And what would the people back home say when she returned wearing the

23 Virgin on her back? What would She say?

"You can wear the picture turned inside where nobody can see it. Look! You will always have holy Mary with you, hovering over you, hugging your shoulders and your breast! Come," he continued, seeing her ready to yield, "it is too late for you to go back to El Tordo. I will paint it now, and tomorrow I and Mariquita will take you home."

"And who is Mariquita?" she wanted to know.

"Mariquita is my little donkey," was the reply.

18

**Simile.** Compares wisp of smoke to a white feather; suggests that this sign of life is a welcome signal of someone present in cabin, someone to help Mana Seda.

19

Mana Seda connects end of storm with miracle from Virgin Mary.

20

**Figurative language.** Mana Seda uses images from nature to describe her vision of the Virgin Mary, whose garments are more splendid than any human-made cloth.

21

Mana Seda may have felt more "confident" since the artist is a religious person.

22

**Why does Esquipula shut his eyes?** Perhaps he is picturing new image of Virgin Mary that he will paint.

23

"She" refers to Virgin Mary; Mana Seda thinks that perhaps it is sacrilegious to wear image of Virgin Mary on her clothing.

11. *gracias a Dios*: thanks to God.

12. *bultos*: busts.

13. *santos*: images of saints.

14. *tilma*: blanket used as a cloak.

15. *tápalo*: woman's shawl.



24

**Characterization.** Mana Seda's talkativeness reveals her excitement about the painting.

25

Esquipula's question is not intended to cause painful memories; he is genuinely interested in Mana Seda's story.

26

Mana Seda's intense desire to be May queen reveals cultural importance of the ritual.

27

**What stops Mana Seda from wanting to end her life?** She begins to think that she can serve in another way.

28

**What is unusual about Esquipula's painting? Why is it significant?** Like Mana Seda's, Virgin Mary's shoulders are rather stooped. Unusual feature of painting suggests Mana Seda's life is saintly.

29

**Allusion.** Esquipula leads Mana Seda on burro as Joseph led Virgin Mary.

Mana Seda's black shawl was duly hung and spread tight against a bare stretch of wall, and Esquipula lost no time in tracing with white chalk the outlines of the small wood-print which he held in his left hand as a model. The actual laying of the colors, however, went much slower because of the shawl's rough and unsized texture. Darkness came, and Esquipula lit an oil lamp, which he held in one hand as he applied the pigments with the other. He even declined joining his aged guest at her evening meal of beans and stale *tortillas*,<sup>16</sup> because he was not hungry, he explained, and the picture must be done.

Once in a while the painter would turn from his work to look at Mana Seda, who had become quite talkative, something the people back at El Tordo would have marveled at greatly. She was recounting experiences of her girlhood which, she explained, were more vivid than many things that had happened recently.

Only once did he interrupt her, and that without thinking first. He said, almost too bluntly: "How did you become hunch-backed?"

Mana Seda hesitated, but did not seem to take the question *amiss*. Patting her shoulder as far as she could reach to her bulging back, she answered, "The woman who was nursing me dropped me on the hard dirt floor when I was a baby, and I grew up like a ball. But I do not remember, of course. My being bent out of shape did not hurt me until the time when other little girls of my age were chosen to be flowermaids in May. When I was older, and other big girls rejoiced at being chosen May queens, I was filled with bitter envy. God forgive me, I even cursed. I at last made up my mind never to go to the May devotions, nor to mass either. In the place of my birth, the

shores of the Rio Grande are made up of wet sand which sucks in every living creature that goes in; I would go there and return no more. But something inside told me the Lord would be most pleased if I helped the other lucky girls with their flowers. That would make me a flower-bearer every day. Esquipula, my son, I have been doing this for seventy-four Mays."

Mana Seda stopped and reflected in deep silence. The youth who had been painting absent-mindedly and looking at her, now noticed for the first time that he had made the Virgin's shoulders rather stooped, like Mana Seda's, though not quite so much. His first impulse was to run the yellow sun-rays into them and cover up the mistake, but for no reason he decided to let things stand as they were. By and by he put the last touches to his *oeuvre de caprice*,<sup>17</sup> offered the old lady his narrow cot in a corner, and went out to pass the night in Mariquita's humble shed.

The following morning saw a young man leading a gray burro through the forest, and on the patient animal's back swayed a round black shape, grasping her mantle with one hand while the other held tight to the small wooden saddle. Behind her, their bright heads bobbing from its wide mouth, rode a sack full of iris and tiger lilies from the meadow where the storm had caught Mana Seda the day before. Every once in a while, Esquipula had to stop the beast and go after some new flower which the rider had spied from her perch; sometimes she made him climb up a steep rock for a *crannied* blossom he would have passed unnoticed.

The sun was going down when they at last trudged into El Tordo and halted before the church, where the priest stood surrounded by a *bevy* of inquiring, disappointed girls. He rushed forth immediately to help Mana Seda

16. *tortillas* (tôr-tê'yās): thin corn pancakes.

17. *oeuvre de caprice* (œ'vr' də kă-prēs'): French for "work of impulse."

off the donkey, while the children pounced upon the flowers with shouts of glee. Asking questions and not waiting for answers, he led the stranger and his still stranger charge into his house, meanwhile giving orders that the burro be taken to his barn and fed.

30 Mana Seda dared not sit with the padre at table and hied herself to the kitchen for her supper. Young Esquipula, however, felt very much at ease, answering all his host's questions intelligently, at which the pastor was agreeably surprised, but not quite so astonished as when he heard for the first time of Mana Seda's childhood disappointments.

"Young man," he said, hurriedly finishing his meal, "there is little time to lose. Tonight is closing of May—and it will be done, although we are unworthy." Dragging his chair closer to the youth, he plotted out his plan in excited whispers which fired Esquipula with an equal enthusiasm.

The last bell was calling the folk of El Tordo in the cool of the evening. Six queens with their many white-veiled maids stood in a nervous, noisy line at the church door, a garden of flowers in their arms. The priest and the stranger stood on guard facing them, begging them to be quiet, looking anxiously at the people who

32 streamed past them into the edifice. Mana Seda finally appeared and tried to slide quietly by, but the padre barred her way and pressed a big basket filled with flowers and lighted candles into her brown, dry hands. At the same time Esquipula took off her black shawl and dropped over her gray head and hunched forward a precious veil of Spanish lace.

In her amazement she could not protest, could not even move a step, until the padre urged her on, whispering into her ear that it was the holy Virgin's express wish. And so

33 Mana Seda led all the queens that evening, slowly and smoothly, not like a black widow

now, folks observed, but like one of those little white moths moving over alfalfa fields in the moonlight. It was the happiest moment of her long life. She felt that she must die from pure joy, and many others observing her thought so too.

She did not die then; for some years afterward, she wore the new black *tápalo* the padre gave her in exchange for the old one, which Esquipula installed in the *retablo* above the altar. But toward the last she could not gather any more flowers on the slopes, much less in the forest. They buried her in a corner of the *campo santo*, and the following May disks of daisies and bunches of verbenas came up on her grave. It is said they have been doing it ever since, for curious travelers to ask about, while pious pilgrims come to pray before the hunchback Madonna.

## Reading Check

1. Why do pilgrims come to El Tordo each year throughout spring and summer?
2. Whose grave do the tourists visit?
3. When the church was finished, what did the padre wish to place over the altar?
4. What kind of work did Mana Seda do?
5. What custom did she begin?
6. How did Mana Seda acquire the flowers for the May devotions?
7. Where did she find shelter from the rain?
8. What kind of work did the young man do?
9. What was unusual about the painting on Mana Seda's black shawl?
10. How was Mana Seda's dream to be a flower-bearer realized?

30

**Characterization.** Mana Seda refuses to dine with priest, apparently feeling more at ease in kitchen.

31

Men are enthusiastic as they plan to honor Mana Seda's life of service.

32

**Characterization.** Mana Seda is accustomed to preparing for the ritual, not directly taking part in it.

33

**Simile.** "Like one of those little white moths" suggests that Mana Seda is transformed into creature of beauty.

## READING CHECK

1. To pray (p. 166).
2. Mana Seda's (p. 166).
3. A painting of the Virgin Mary (p. 167).
4. Kept church clean, rang Angelus, adorned altar (p. 167).
5. Having girls present flowers to Virgin Mary in May (p. 167).
6. Grew some and picked others (p. 167).
7. In small adobe hut of an artist (p. 169).
8. Made religious sculptures and paintings (p. 169).
9. Virgin Mary was hunchbacked (p. 170).
10. Was asked to lead procession (p. 171).

## CLOSURE

Ask students to tell how the story of Mana Seda is related to the custom of bringing flowers to the Virgin Mary. Have them also comment on the importance of the remote **setting** of the mission to the story.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Because of the story of Mana Seda, pilgrims and tourists want to see the painting and visit her grave.
- 2a. She unselfishly devoted her life to caring for the church and helping others. 2b. She overcame her disappointments and selfish desires and helped others.
- 3a. Uses Spanish words and expressions in describing local customs, area, and people. Main characters are portrayed as generous, considerate people.
- 3b. Their cadences vividly suggest the particular region and its people and carry meanings specific to the culture.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Responses will vary. Some details are in descriptions of church, women's preparations, and canyon; also Mana Seda's saying "gracias a Dios." Such details contribute to reader's understanding, visualization, and appreciation of region. Without these details, story would lose its sense of history; it would seem more like a fairy tale than legend.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Las Cruces*—the crosses.  
*Llano Estacado*—staked plain.  
*Los Alamos*—the poplar trees.  
*Sierra Blanca*—sierra means "saw" and blanca means "white or blank." *Sierra Blanca* is a saw-toothed range of whitish mountains.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fray Angelico Chavez is also a gifted artist; many of his works, such as *Coronado's Friars* and *The Song of Francis*, were self-illustrated. At age sixty-two, he left a thirty-five-year career serving the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico to concentrate on his writing. Currently, Chavez has several books in progress on the history of the American Southwest.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

In this story, the townspeople have their own ideas about how Mana Seda came by her name, which means "Sister Silk." Have students write their own explanations for the origin of this unusual name.

Students who enjoy this story might like to read more of the author's writings in *The Short Stories of Fray Angelico Chavez*.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. El Tordo has become a kind of local shrine visited by pilgrims and tourists. Why has this place become honored?
- 2a. In what way is Mana Seda's life an inspiration? b. In what way might her life be considered saintly?
- 3a. How does Chavez convey the character of the region and its people? b. How does the use of Spanish words and expressions contribute to the flavor of the locale?

## Literary Elements

### Local Color

Chavez' story is set in the area around the Truchas Mountains in New Mexico. The inhabitants of the town of El Tordo are of Spanish descent. The conversations of the characters are sprinkled with Spanish words and expressions, and their food, clothing, and religious customs are clearly Spanish or Mexican in origin.

All these details—speech, dress, customs, and scenery associated with a particular setting—are known as **local color**. The purpose of local color is to give the reader the flavor of a specific locale.

1. Return to the story and find at least three details that provide local color. What would the story lose if these details were not included?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Finding Meanings of Place Names

Many place names in New Mexico are of Spanish origin. The Rio Grande, for example, literally means "great river." Santa Fe means "holy faith" in Spanish.

- Here are some place names that come from Spanish. In a dictionary find the meaning of each name.

Las Cruces  
Llano Estacado

Los Alamos  
Sierra Blanca

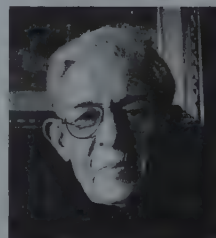
## Writing About Literature

### Responding to an Interpretation

Genaro Padilla, editor of Chavez' stories, has written that the stories resemble "*cuentos morales* (moral tales), meant not only for entertainment but to instill moral and social responsibility in the members of the community. . . ." Do you think such a purpose underlies the events in "Mana Seda"? Does the story uphold certain traditions and cultural values? In a brief paragraph discuss your response.

## About the Author

### Fray Angelico Chavez (1910– )



Fray Angelico Chavez is a retired Franciscan priest who lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He was born Manuel E. Chavez in Wagon Mound. Because he was a painter, he took the name Fra Angelico

after the famous medieval Italian painter Fra Angelico (Giovanni da Fiesole 1387–1455). For many years he worked as a missionary priest. During World War II and the Korean War, he served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army.

Chavez began writing poetry when he was a teen-ager in the Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has written many short stories, tales, and a novel, and is widely known as a scholar. Some of his stories are collected in *The Short Stories of Fray Angelico Chavez*, published in 1987.

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the author's use of **characterization** and **plot** to develop **theme**. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 179 will give students practice in using a dictionary to find information about the history of selected words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students the meaning of the word *Magi*. Mention that O. Henry's story is not one about Biblical times but about the early twentieth century in New York City, just before Christmas.

# THEME

## The Gift of the Magi

O. HENRY

*The Magi were wise men from the East who brought gifts to the infant Jesus in the manger. What is the gift referred to in the title of this story?*

One dollar and eighty-seven cents. That was all. And sixty cents of it was in pennies. Pennies saved one and two at a time by bulldozing the grocer and the vegetable man and the butcher until one's cheek burned with silent imputation of parsimony<sup>1</sup> that such close dealing implied. Three times Della counted it. One dollar and eighty-seven cents. And the next day would be Christmas.

There was clearly nothing to do but flop down on the shabby little couch and howl. So Della did it. Which instigates the moral reflection that life is made up of sobs, sniffles, and smiles, with sniffles predominating.

While the mistress of the home is gradually subsiding from the first stage to the second,

take a look at the home. A furnished flat at eight dollars per week. It did not exactly beggar description, but it certainly had that word on the lookout for the mendicancy squad.<sup>2</sup>

In the vestibule below was a letter box into which no letter would go, and an electric button from which no mortal finger could coax a ring. Also appertaining thereunto was a card bearing the name "Mr. James Dillingham Young."

The "Dillingham" had been flung to the breeze during a former period of prosperity when its possessor was being paid thirty dollars per week. Now, when the income was shrunk to twenty dollars, the letters of "Dillingham" looked blurred, as though they were thinking

1. **imputation** (im'pyōō-tā'shən) of **parsimony** (pār'sə-mō'nē): accusation of stinginess.

\*For additional teaching materials related to theme, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Composition Test 5 / Reteaching Worksheet 1*

2. **mendicancy** (mēn'dī-kən'sē) **squad**: a police squad that picked up beggars.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the gift that the two main characters give to each other. You might want to discuss how the theme of the story is related to the gifts they give and receive.

## The Gift of the Magi

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **characterization**, **plot**, and **theme** in "The Gift of the Magi."

**1** *What inference can be made about the main character from the phrase "bulldozing the grocer"?* Suggests that Della is poor, frugal, spends money carefully, reluctantly.

**2** **Conflict.** Poverty at this time is especially troubling.

**3** **Characterization.** Della's problem seems insurmountable; her response is to cry.

**4** **Diction.** Use of words "beggar" and "mendicancy squad" emphasizes characters' financial plight.

**5** The name "Dillingham" seems pretentious on mailbox of the run-down apartment.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The Youngs are a young couple, struggling to get by on a meager twenty dollars a week. Life is hard, and the pennies saved are few and far between. The Youngs have only two worthwhile possessions—Della's beautiful, flowing hair and

Jim's antique gold watch. On Christmas Eve, Della is sad; she has only one dollar and eighty-seven cents to buy her husband a Christmas present. She has no way to get any money and no possessions to sell. She has nothing except . . . her hair.

## PRESENTATION

Most students will be able to read and enjoy this story independently. After students have completed their reading, use the questions in **For Study and Discussion** and **Literary Elements** on p. 178 to generate discussion and analysis.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The term *Magi* is derived from *Magus*, an ancient Persian cult, and has been applied to all manner of soothsayers and magicians. The Magi were, above all, astrologers—reflected by the Three Wise Men following the Star of the East to the cradle of the infant Jesus. The accepted names of the Three Wise Men are Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Gift-giving as an expression of love antedates Christianity; the Romans gave gifts during a winter holiday. In some countries, gifts are given on a day other than Christmas Day. In England, for example, gifts are given on December 26. The day is called Boxing Day, referring to the boxes of gifts that are made up for the poor. In several countries, gifts are given to children on Twelfth Night by persons portraying the Magi.

### Ideas for Writing

Students might consider the meaning of Christmas gifts in contemporary life. Ask them to consider whether Christmas has become overly commercial because of the intensive advertising campaigns of department stores and toy manufacturers or whether the custom of giving gifts remains a genuine expression of love and affection. Students might then write a response to the discussion.



Drawing for *The Gift of the Magi* by Lisabeth Zwerger.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 17 / Selection Test 17 / Reading Check 17 / Vocabulary Test 9 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 17

You may want to have students work in small groups to answer these questions.

The love theme is so important in life and literature that you might ask students to look for it in the short stories previously read. They may comment on the different kinds of love por-

trayed: for example, the love of a boy and his grandmother in "Before the End of Summer" and a mother's concern for her son in "All the Years of Her Life." Ask students to try to imagine for a moment the life of Della and Jim without the generous and trusting love they have shown.

If they were simply two young people finding fault with one another while trying to scratch out a living, how drab their story would be! Their love makes them special and memorable.

seriously of contracting to a modest and unassuming D. But whenever Mr. James Dillingham Young came home and reached his flat above he was called "Jim" and greatly hugged by Mrs. James Dillingham Young, already introduced to you as Della. Which is all very good.

Della finished her cry and attended to her cheeks with the powder rag. She stood by the window and looked out dully at a gray cat walking a gray fence in a gray backyard. Tomorrow would be Christmas Day, and she had only one dollar and eighty-seven cents with which to buy Jim a present. She had been saving every penny she could for months, with this result. Twenty dollars a week doesn't go far. Expenses had been greater than she had calculated. They always are. Only one dollar and eighty-seven cents to buy a present for Jim. Her Jim. Many a happy hour she had spent planning for something nice for him. Something fine and rare and sterling—something just a little bit near to being worthy of the honor of being owned by Jim.

There was a pier glass<sup>3</sup> between the windows of the room. Perhaps you have seen a pier glass in an eight-dollar flat. A very thin and very agile person may, by observing his reflection in a rapid sequence of longitudinal strips, obtain a fairly accurate conception of his looks. Della, being slender, had mastered the art.

Suddenly she whirled from the window and stood before the glass. Her eyes were shining brilliantly, but her face had lost its color within twenty seconds. Rapidly she pulled down her hair and let it fall to its full length.

Now there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim's gold watch that had been his father's and his grandfather's.

The other was Della's hair. Had the Queen of

Sheba<sup>4</sup> lived in the flat across the air shaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window someday to dry, just to depreciate Her Majesty's jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.

So now Dell's beautiful hair fell about her, rippling and shining like a cascade of brown waters. It reached below her knee and made itself almost a garment for her. And then she did it up again nervously and quickly. Once she faltered for a minute and stood still while a tear or two splashed on the worn red carpet.

On went her old brown jacket; on went her old brown hat. With a whirl of skirts and with the brilliant sparkle still in her eyes, she flattered out the door and down the stairs to the street.

Where she stopped the sign read: "Mme. Sofronie. Hair Goods of All Kinds." One flight up Della ran—and collected herself, panting. Madame, large, too white, chilly, hardly looked the "Sofronie."

"Will you buy my hair?" asked Della.

"I buy hair," said Madame. "Take yer hat off and let's have a sight at the looks of it."

Down rippled the brown cascade.

"Twenty dollars," said Madame, lifting the mass with a practiced hand.

"Give it to me quick," said Della.

Oh, and the next two hours tripped by on rosy wings. Forget the hashed metaphor. She was ransacking the stores for Jim's present.

She found it at last. It surely had been made for Jim and no one else. There was no other like it in any of the stores, and she had turned

4. **Queen of Sheba** (shē'bə): in the Bible, a queen from southern Arabia, famous for her wealth and beauty. When she heard of King Solomon's reputation for wisdom, she came to test him with hard questions.

6 **Point of view.** Omniscient narrator has a confiding attitude toward readers, inviting them to look in on the young couple.

7 Repetition of fact that Della has only "one dollar and eighty-seven cents" emphasizes her quandary and reveals her constant concern.

8 **Characterization.** Della's intense love for Jim is revealed through her thoughts of him.

9 **What is the narrator's attitude toward Della?** Seems to be amused, sympathetic, playful, admiring, and affectionate.

10 **Allusion.** Della and Jim would measure their treasures against the riches of the Biblical Sheba and Solomon.

11 **Conflict.** In Della's internal conflict, her love for Jim wins out; she will sacrifice her beautiful hair for him.

12 **Why does Della ask Madame Sofronie to give her the money quickly?** Perhaps she is afraid she might change her mind.

3. **pier glass:** a long, narrow mirror designed to fit between two windows.



**13** Della knows her husband well; she is sensitive to his shame about unfashionable old leather strap.

**14** Because of “prudence and reason,” Della decides she must make herself presentable for Jim.

**15** *Coney Island*: island in New York City, off south shore of Long Island; beach and amusement park.

**16** *Does Della’s prayer seem to be motivated from vanity or love for Jim?* Love for Jim; if vanity came first, she would not have sacrificed her hair.

**17** *Simile*. “Immovable as a setter at the scene of quail” suggests intensity of Jim’s feelings when he sees Della.

**18** *Suspense*. Jim’s behavior builds suspense and prepares readers for the ironic outcome.

all of them inside out. It was a platinum fob chain simple and chaste in design, properly proclaiming its value by substance alone and not by meretricious<sup>5</sup> ornamentation—as all good things should do. It was even worthy of The Watch. As soon as she saw it she knew that it must be Jim’s. It was like him. Quietness and value—the description applied to both. Twenty-one dollars they took from her for it, and she hurried home with the eighty-seven cents. With that chain on his watch Jim might be properly anxious about the time in any company. Grand as the watch was, he sometimes looked at it on the sly on account of the old leather strap that he used in place of a chain.

When Della reached home her intoxication **14** gave way a little to prudence and reason. She got out her curling irons and lighted the gas and went to work repairing the ravages made by generosity added to love. Which is always a tremendous task, dear friends—a mammoth task.

Within forty minutes her head was covered with tiny, close-lying curls that made her look wonderfully like a truant schoolboy. She looked at her reflection in the mirror long, carefully, and critically.

“If Jim doesn’t kill me,” she said to herself, “before he takes a second look at me, he’ll say **15** I look like a Coney Island chorus girl. But what could I do—oh! what could I do with a dollar and eighty-seven cents?”

At seven o’clock the coffee was made and the frying pan was on the back of the stove hot and ready to cook the chops.

Jim was never late. Della doubled the fob chain in her hand and sat on the corner of the table near the door that he always entered. Then she heard his step on the stair away down on the first flight, and she turned white

5. *meretricious* (mĕr’ə-trīsh’əs): attractive in a cheap, flashy way.

for just a moment. She had a habit of saying little silent prayers about the simplest everyday things, and now she whispered, “Please, God, **16** make him think I am still pretty.”

The door opened and Jim stepped in and closed it. He looked thin and very serious. Poor fellow, he was only twenty-two—and to be burdened with a family! He needed a new overcoat and he was without gloves.

**17** Jim stopped inside the door, as immovable as a setter at the scent of quail. His eyes were fixed upon Della; and there was an expression in them that she could not read, and it terrified her. It was not anger, nor surprise, nor disapproval, nor horror, nor any of the sentiments that she had been prepared for. He simply stared at her fixedly with that peculiar expression on his face.

Della wriggled off the table and went to him.

“Jim, darling,” she cried, “don’t look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold it because I couldn’t have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. It’ll grow out again—you won’t mind, will you? I just had to do it. My hair grows awfully fast. Say ‘Merry Christmas!’ Jim, and let’s be happy. You don’t know what a nice—what a beautiful, nice gift I’ve got for you.”

“You’ve cut off your hair?” asked Jim laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor.

“Cut it off and sold it,” said Della. “Don’t you like me just as well, anyhow? I’m me without my hair, ain’t I?”

**18** Jim looked about the room curiously.

“You say your hair is gone?” he said, with an air almost of idiocy.

“You needn’t look for it,” said Della. “It’s sold, I tell you—sold and gone, too. It’s Christmas Eve, boy. Be good to me, for it went for you. Maybe the hairs of my head were numbered,” she went on with a sudden serious sweetness, “but nobody could ever count my

love for you. Shall I put the chops on, Jim?"

Out of his trance Jim seemed quickly to wake. He enfolded his Della. For ten seconds  
19 let us regard with discreet scrutiny some inconsequential object in the other direction. Eight dollars a week or a million a year—what is the difference? A mathematician or a wit would give you the wrong answer. The Magi<sup>6</sup> brought valuable gifts, but that was not among them. This dark assertion will be illuminated later on.

Jim drew a package from his overcoat pocket 22 and threw it upon the table.

"Don't make any mistake, Dell," he said, "about me. I don't think there's anything in the 23 way of a haircut or a shave or a shampoo that could make me like my girl any less. But if you'll unwrap that package you may see why you had me going awhile at first."

White fingers and nimble tore at the string and paper. And then an ecstatic scream of joy; and then, alas! a quick feminine change to hysterical tears and wails, necessitating the immediate employment of all the comforting powers of the lord of the flat.

20 For there lay The Combs—the set of combs, 24 side and back, that Della had worshiped for long in a Broadway window. Beautiful combs, pure tortoise shell, with jeweled rims—just the shade to wear in the beautiful vanished hair. They were expensive combs, she knew, and her heart had simply craved and yearned over them without the least hope of possession. And now they were hers, but the tresses that should have adorned the coveted adornments were gone.

But she hugged them to her bosom, and at length she was able to look up with dim eyes  
21 and a smile and say, "My hair grows so fast, Jim!"

And then Della leaped up like a little singed cat and cried, "Oh, oh!"

6. **Magi** (mā'jī').

Jim had not yet seen his beautiful present. She held it out to him eagerly upon her open palm. The dull precious metal seemed to flash with a reflection of her bright and ardent spirit.

"Isn't it a dandy, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch. I want to see how it looks on it."

Instead of obeying, Jim tumbled down on the couch and put his hands under the back of his head and smiled.

"Della," said he, "let's put our Christmas presents away and keep 'em awhile. They're too nice to use just at present. I sold the watch to get the money to buy your combs. And now suppose you put the chops on."

The Magi, as you know, were wise men—wonderfully wise men—who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents. Being wise, their gifts were no doubt wise ones, possibly bearing the privilege of exchange in case of duplication. And here I have lamely related to you the uneventful chronicle of two foolish children in a flat who most unwisely sacrificed for each other the greatest treasures of their house. But in a last word to the wise of these days let it be said that of all who give gifts these two were the wisest. Of all who give and receive gifts, such as they are wisest. Everywhere they are wisest. They are the Magi.

19

Narrator stresses importance of love over money when he points out that, although couple lives in eight-dollar-a-week apartment, they are rich with love.

20

**Irony.** Jim has given Della combs for the hair she no longer has.

21

**Characterization.** Della quickly overcomes her lament and becomes optimistic.

22

**What does Jim's smile indicate?** Responses will vary. He has no regrets; realizes greatest gift is Della's unselfish love.

23

**Irony.** Jim no longer needs the chain, for he has no watch to put it on.

24

**Theme.** Narrator refers to sacrifice as "unwise" in material sense, yet calls Della and Jim "wisest"; they gave gift of unselfish love.

### READING CHECK

1. His gold watch and her hair (p. 175).
2. Twenty dollars (p. 175).
3. A fob chain (p. 176).
4. A set of combs (p. 177).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Although O. Henry makes a little fun of Della, he describes her with amused affection when she cries about lack of money, looks in pier glass, and prays that Jim will still think she is pretty.

2a. Jim and Della sacrifice their most precious possessions for each other and have no use for gifts each has bought. 2b. Jim and Della are not made to seem foolish or contemptible. They show a wisdom higher than practical common sense.

3. Opinions may vary. It is fair and logical in that Della and Jim have been shown as impoverished young people who are willing to sacrifice to give each other something beautiful. Neither had anything else to sell.

4a. Love is the gift. Like wise men of Biblical times, Jim and Della have brought something to give. 4b. Since their gift is love—unselfish, sacrificial, enduring love—they and people like them are wisest.

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

#### Theme

1. Della and Jim become universal symbols for unselfish love. Author states that people such as Della and Jim who give such love are wisest giftgivers of all.

#### Allusions

1. Account of meeting of wise and rich King Solomon and rich Queen of Sheba appears in I Kings 10. The allusion enables author to comment on the relative value of material possessions. Sheba's and Solomon's riches were not at all in a class with Della's flowing hair and Jim's heirloom watch, which they gave in pure, unselfish love.

### Reading Check

1. What are the two prized possessions of Jim and Della?
2. How much money does Della get from Madame Sofronie?
3. What gift does Della choose for Jim?
4. What is contained in the package Jim has brought home?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting Theme

1. What is the author's attitude toward Della? For example, do his humorous comments about her indicate that he thinks she is silly and impractical? Or are these comments affectionate and good-natured? Explain.

2. An ironic situation is one in which the characters' actions bring about an unexpected result. a. What is ironic about the outcome of "The Gift of the Magi"? b. Often, an ironic situation tends to belittle characters, to make them seem foolish or contemptible. Is this the case with Della and Jim? Why or why not?

3. O. Henry is famous for the surprise endings in his stories. Some of his endings have been criticized as unfair tricks. Is the end of "The Gift of the Magi" unfair? Or is it a logical ending, considering what you know about Jim and Della? Explain.

4a. What is the gift O. Henry refers to in the title and what has it to do with the Magi?

b. Why, according to O. Henry, are people like Jim and Della "the wisest"?

### Literary Elements

#### Theme

As you read "The Gift of the Magi," you probably realized that O. Henry was not simply telling a story about a young married couple whose plans misfire. Behind his plot and its surprise ending there is a controlling idea about what is important and unimportant in life. In the last paragraph of the story, he explicitly states his controlling idea—that love such as Della's and Jim's is far more important than any material gift. Such a controlling idea—an expression of a point of view about

life—is called a **theme**. How does the story's theme give significance to Della and Jim, who otherwise might be viewed as an insignificant poor couple living in a large city?

#### Allusions

In expressing his theme, O. Henry compares Della's and Jim's gifts to the gifts of the Magi. He expects his readers to know the story of the three wise men who made the journey to Bethlehem to pay homage to the Christ Child. According to tradition, the Magi were three kings named Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthazar; the gifts they brought were gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Understanding the story's theme depends to some extent on recognizing this **allusion** to the Biblical story.

An allusion is an indirect reference to literature, history, art, music, or the like, which a writer expects readers to recognize. When an allusion is used effectively, it helps the reader call up certain associations that clarify or enrich the writer's meaning. At one point in his narrative, O. Henry makes an allusion to the Biblical story of Solomon and Sheba. Locate this allusion and tell how it is important to the plot and theme.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to comment on why the **characterization** of both Della and Jim make the **plot** and the **theme** of "The Gift of the Magi" believable.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Learning About Word Histories

The study of the origin and development of words is called **etymology** (ět'ə-mōl'ə-jē). The word *etymology* also refers to the history of a word. In a dictionary entry, information about the history of a word is usually shown in brackets. Here, for example, is the etymology, or history, of the word *Magi*, showing how it developed from earlier languages:

[Magi L., pl. of *magus* <Gr. *magos* <O Per. *magus* (or Iran. *magu-*) member of a priestly caste, magician <IE. base \**magh-*, to be able, whence MIGHT, L. *machina*]

This etymology tells you that *Magi* is the Latin plural of *magus*, which comes from the Greek word *magos*, which itself was derived from an Old Persian or Iranian word meaning a "member of a priestly caste or a magician." The base of the word can be traced back to an Indo-European family of languages. The word *Magi* is related through this ancestor to *might*, which came into the English language through another Latin word, *machina*.

The abbreviations used in etymologies are generally explained in the front matter of a dictionary. Become familiar with the symbols and abbreviations used in your own dictionary.

Using an unabridged or college dictionary, answer the following questions about words used in "The Gift of the Magi."

1. What is the meaning of the Latin word *calculus*, a root for our word *calculate*?
2. To which languages can we trace the word *cascade*?
3. What is the original slang meaning of *coax*?
4. The word *dandy* is probably a playful form of what boy's name?
5. What are the meanings of *in* + *toxicare*, responsible for our word *intoxicate*?
6. What are the meanings of *rann* + *saka*, the roots of *ransack*?
7. What language can *shabby* be traced back to?
8. What is the meaning of *transe*, an Old French ancestor of *trance*?
9. To which languages can we trace the word *treasure*?
10. What is the meaning of the Old French origin of *truant*?

## Writing About Literature

### Evaluating a Story

"The Gift of the Magi" is one of the most famous short stories ever written. It has appeared in countless anthologies. What do you think is the reason for the story's appeal? In your estimation, how important is the surprise ending? How important is the theme?

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Calculus* is a method of analysis or calculation using a special symbolic notation.
2. *Cascade* can be traced to French, Italian, Vulgar Latin, and Latin.
3. The original slang meaning of *coax* is "to caress or fondle."
4. The word *dandy* probably is a playful form of the boy's name Jack (jack-a-dandy).
5. *In* means "in or within," and *toxicare* means "to poison."
6. *Rann* means "house," and *saka* means "to search."
7. *Shabby* can be traced back to Old English.
8. *Transe* means "to depart."
9. *Treasure* can be traced to Middle English, Old French, Latin, and Greek.
10. Meaning of Old French origin of *truant* is "beggar."

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Allow students class time to discuss the questions posed in this assignment. It is unlikely that they will reach a consensus, but the debate should stimulate ideas. Remind students that these essays are essentially arguments—they will be trying to make a reader accept their evaluation of the story. To do this, they will need to reason carefully and support their assertions as much as possible.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students write sequels to "The Gift of the Magi." The purpose here is for students to imagine what happens after the events in O. Henry's story. Students may write their stories in the style of O. Henry if they wish.

## CREATIVE WRITING

Write the suggested themes on the chalkboard. Let students discuss them for a few minutes to develop ideas for characters, conflicts, and settings. Stories might be started in class and completed at home.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

O. Henry was one of America's most fascinating short story writers. After moving to Texas, Porter started his own humorous weekly, *The Rolling Stone*, and also maintained a daily humor column in the *Houston Post*. Primarily, it was O. Henry's prison term that led him to become a full-fledged literary writer rather than merely a journalist. After his move to New York he became enthralled with its ordinary people and how their simple lives could reveal unusual and unexpected tales. O. Henry was a master storyteller with a flair for that irony of events that catches the unsuspecting reader off guard and delights him or her with a surprise ending.

Some students may enjoy writing their own short play of "The Gift of the Magi" and presenting it to the class. Students should use the **dialogue** from the story, adding only what is necessary to make a smooth transition from print to oral presentation.

Students who enjoyed this selection might want to read more of O. Henry's short stories in such collections as *The Voice of the City* and *Whirligigs*.

## Creative Writing

### ▶ Writing a Story with a Theme

The theme of "The Gift of the Magi"—that the best gifts are the gifts of love and sacrifice—is stated in the last paragraph of the story. O. Henry leads up to his theme throughout the story, however, by stressing the unselfish love of Della and Jim. Choose a theme for a brief story of your own. If you like, use one of the following suggestions. Try to suggest your theme through the actions of the characters, then state it at the very end.

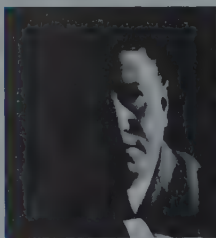
It is better to give than to receive.

We must get to know people before we can really like them.

True love is forgiving.

## About the Author

### O. Henry (1862–1910)



O. Henry's real name was William Sydney Porter. The son of a doctor, he grew up in Greensboro, North Carolina. When he was twenty, he moved to Texas for reasons of health. He settled in

Austin, where he worked as a clerk, book-keeper, and bank teller. To earn more money, he began contributing news items and sketches to newspapers throughout the country, and in 1895, he moved to Houston to work as a reporter for the *Houston Post*. Nine months later he was called back to Austin to stand trial for bank embezzlement. Porter was almost certainly innocent of the charge. The bank he had worked for was notoriously lax in its account-

ing procedures, and Porter himself had probably been no more than careless. He boarded a train to Austin, but on impulse he went to New Orleans instead, and then to Honduras in Central America. Three years later, the news that his wife was seriously ill brought him back to Texas. He stood trial, was convicted, and served five years in prison.

When he was released, he went to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he began once again to write. His editors encouraged him to move to New York. It was in New York that Porter adopted the pen name of O. Henry and became a famous writer of short stories. He was a prolific writer. In 1905 alone he wrote sixty-five short stories. In his stories, he drew on his experiences out West and in Latin America. Above all, he drew on his knowledge of and fascination with New York, whose streets he roamed in search of ideas. He called New York "Baghdad-on-the-Subway," comparing it to the fabulous city of Scheherazade's *A Thousand and One Nights*. Some of his best stories are collected in *The Four Million*, *The Voice of the City*, *Hearts of the West*, *The Gentle Grafters*, and *Whirligigs*.

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on page 209.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of irony to the theme of "The Balek Scales." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 188 will give students practice in using context clues to determine the meanings of selected words from the story.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

To demonstrate Franz Brücher's problem in this story, you might borrow balance scales and weights from your school science department. Arrange ahead of time for a student to demonstrate the proper use of weights.

# The Balek Scales

**HEINRICH BÖLL**

Translated by  
Leila Vennewitz

*You have seen that an object used as a symbol can stand for something larger than itself. In what way do the Balek scales function as a symbol in this story?*

- 1 Where my grandfather came from, most of the people lived by working in the flax sheds. For five generations they had been breathing in the dust which rose from the crushed flax stalks, letting themselves be killed off by slow degrees, a race of long-suffering, cheerful people who ate goat cheese, potatoes, and now and then a rabbit; in the evening they would sit at home spinning and knitting; they sang, drank mint tea and were happy. During the day they would carry the flax stalks to the antiquated machines, with no protection from the dust and at the mercy of the heat which came pouring out of the drying kilns. Each cottage contained only one bed, standing against the wall like a closet and reserved for the parents, while the children slept all round the room on benches. In the morning the room would be filled with the odor of thin soup; on Sundays there was stew, and on feast days the children's faces would light up with pleasure as they watched the black acorn coffee turning paler and paler from the milk their smiling mother poured into their coffee mugs.
- 4 the housework was left to the children: they would sweep the room, tidy up, wash the dishes and peel the potatoes, precious pale-yellow fruit whose thin peel had to be produced afterwards to dispel any suspicion of extravagance or carelessness.
- 5 As soon as the children were out of school they had to go off into the woods and, depending on the season, gather mushrooms and herbs: woodruff and thyme, caraway, mint and foxglove, and in summer, when they had brought in the hay from their meager fields, they gathered hayflowers. A kilo<sup>1</sup> of hayflowers was worth one pfennig,<sup>2</sup> and they were sold by the apothecaries in town for twenty pfennigs a kilo to highly strung ladies. The mushrooms were highly prized: they fetched twenty pfennigs a kilo and were sold in the shops in town for one mark<sup>3</sup> twenty. The

1. **kilo** (kē'lō): short for *kilogram*, a unit of weight a little over two pounds.

2. **pfennig** (fēn'ig): a coin like the United States penny.

3. **mark**: at one time, the monetary unit in several European countries; now the monetary unit in Germany. There are one hundred pfennigs to a mark.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the importance of **symbolism**. Ask students to be alert to the symbolic meaning of the scales and how this symbolic element enlarges the meaning of the story.

## The Balek Scales

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding a discussion and analysis of **irony**, **theme**, and **characterization**.

1 **Point of view.** A first-person narrator tells his grandfather's story.

2 Opening paragraphs provide important background information about life style of people in Eastern European village.

3 Although life style described is grueling, parents and children find pleasure in simple things.

4 Because parents worked such long hours, children shared many of the household responsibilities.

5 Long before child labor laws, the whole family worked to provide a meager living.



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The rich and powerful Balek family lives in a chateau while poor peasants work in the Baleks' flax sheds. The Baleks guard their power zealously: only they are allowed to own scales, with which they weigh the herbs and flowers harvested by

the local children. But one day, left alone for a moment with the scales, a clever village boy decides to test the scales against the factory-wrapped pound of coffee he has with him to see if the Balek scales are fair.

## PRESENTATION

Students' first response to their reading of this story may be dissatisfaction and even anger. This is a good and honest response. Ask students what their attitude is toward the boy, Franz Brücher, and what they find remarkable about

6

German society at this time was highly stratified, with many gradations of social class; Balek family is rich and respected.

7

Life for each generation remains the same; there was little social mobility, people were expected to stay within their class and not harbor "unseemly" ambitions.

8

Irony. "Line of justice" that fades and must be redrawn is first of several ironic references to justice.

9

*Did the peasants have any recourse? What would have been the consequences?* No. Peasants were at mercy of landowners. Obedience was rewarded, disobedience and questioning of authority punished.

10

Children are even more powerless than their parents; there seems to be little chance of questioning scales.

11

Again, "justice" is used to apply to unjust class system.

12

**Characterization.** Wealthy Baleks, respected for their charitable and religious contributions, evidently do not seem particularly generous. Contributions appear minimal.

children would crawl deep into the green darkness of the forest during the autumn when dampness drove the mushrooms out of the soil, and almost every family had its own places where it gathered mushrooms, places which were handed down in whispers from generation to generation.

6 The woods belonged to the Baleks, as well as the flax sheds, and in my grandfather's village the Baleks had a chateau, and the wife of the head of the family had a little room next to the dairy where mushrooms, herbs and hayflowers were weighed and paid for. There on the table stood the great Balek scales, an old-fashioned, ornate bronze-gilt contraption, which my 7 grandfather's grandparents had already faced when they were children, their grubby hands holding their little baskets of mushrooms, their paper bags of hayflowers, breathlessly watching the number of weights Frau Balek had to throw on the scale before the swinging pointer 8 came to rest exactly over the black line, that 10 thin line of justice which had to be redrawn every year. Then Frau Balek would take the big book covered in brown leather, write down the weight, and pay out the money, pfennigs or ten-pfennigs or ten-pfennig pieces and very, very occasionally, a mark. And when my grandfather was a child there was a big glass jar of lemon drops standing there, the kind that cost one mark a kilo, and when Frau 11 Balek—whichever one happened to be presiding over the little room—was in a good mood, 12 she would put her hand into this jar and give each child a lemon drop, and the children's faces would light up with pleasure, the way they used to when on feast days their mother poured milk into their coffee mugs, milk that made the coffee turn paler and paler until it was as pale as the flaxen pigtailed of the little girls.

One of the laws imposed by the Baleks on the village was: No one was permitted to have

any scales in the house. The law was so ancient that nobody gave a thought as to when and 9 how it had arisen, and it had to be obeyed, for anyone who broke it was dismissed from the flax sheds, he could not sell his mushrooms or his thyme or his hayflowers, and the power of the Baleks was so far-reaching that no one in the neighboring villages would give him work either, or buy his forest herbs. But since the days when my grandfather's parents had gone out as small children to gather mushrooms and sell them in order that they might season the meat of the rich people of Prague<sup>4</sup> or be baked into game pies, it had never occurred to anyone to break this law: flour could be measured in cups, eggs could be counted, what they had spun could be measured by the yard, and besides, the old-fashioned bronze-gilt, ornate Balek scales did not look as if there was anything wrong with them, and five generations had entrusted the swinging black pointer with what they had gone out as eager children to gather from the woods.

True, there were some among these quiet people who flouted the law, poachers bent on making more money in one night than they could earn in a whole month in the flax sheds, but even these people apparently never thought of buying scales or making their own. My grandfather was the first person bold 11 enough to test the justice of the Baleks, the family who lived in the chateau and drove two carriages, who always maintained one boy from the village while he studied theology at the seminary in Prague, the family with whom the priest played taroc every Wednesday, on whom the local reeve,<sup>5</sup> in his carriage emblazoned with the Imperial coat of arms, made an annual New Year's Day call and on whom the Emperor conferred a title on the first day of the year 1900.

4. **Prague** (prăg): the capital of Czechoslovakia.

5. **reeve**: the chief officer of a district.

him.

The questions on textbook pp. 187–188 stimulate thoughtful consideration of **plot** and **theme**. You may also want to enlarge students' understanding of the universality of Böll's theme. Look briefly at the history of villages near Prague.

Whether we identify the villagers as Czechs, Slavs, Bohemians, Sudeten Germans, or Poles, we can see that they were at the mercy of greedy landowners and a repressive government. Ask students what chance a Franz Brücher would have of standing up for justice or freedom in a

village in that area today.

Some of your students should be able to recall family stories of the unjust treatment of their own ancestors abroad or in this country. Perhaps students too can cite instances of injustice in contemporary society.

**13** My grandfather was hardworking and smart; he crawled further into the woods than the children of his clan had crawled before him, he penetrated as far as the thicket where, according to legend, Bilgan the Giant was supposed to dwell, guarding a treasure. But my grandfather was not afraid of Bilgan: he worked his way deep into the thicket, even when he was quite little, and brought out great quantities of mushrooms; he even found truffles, for which Frau Balek paid thirty pfennigs

**14** a pound. Everything my grandfather took to the Baleks he entered on the back of a torn-off calendar page: every pound of mushrooms, every gram of thyme, and on the right-hand side, in his childish handwriting, he entered the amount he received for each item; he scrawled in every pfennig, from the age of seven to the age of twelve, and by the time he

**15** was twelve the year 1900 had arrived, and because the Baleks had been raised to the aristocracy by the Emperor, they gave every family in the village a quarter of a pound of real coffee, the Brazilian kind; there was also free beer and tobacco for the men, and at the château there was a great banquet; many carriages stood in the avenue of poplars leading from the entrance gates to the château.

But the day before the banquet the coffee

was distributed in the little room which had housed the Balek scales for almost a hundred years, and the Balek family was now called Balek von Bilgan because, according to legend, Bilgan the Giant used to have a great castle on the site of the present Balek estate.

My grandfather often used to tell me how he went there after school to fetch the coffee for four families: the Cechs, the Weidlers, the Vohlas and his own, the Brüchers. It was the afternoon of New Year's Eve: there were the front rooms to be decorated, the baking to be done, and the families did not want to spare

to the château to bring back a quarter of a pound of coffee.

And so my grandfather sat on the narrow wooden bench in the little room while Gertrud the maid counted out the wrapped four-ounce packages of coffee, four of them, and he looked at the scales and saw that the pound weight was still lying on the left-hand scale; Frau Balek von Bilgan was busy with preparations for the banquet. And when Gertrud was about to put her hand into the jar with the lemon drops to give my grandfather one, she discovered it was empty: it was refilled once a year, and held one kilo of the kind that cost a mark.

Gertrud laughed and said: "Wait here while I get the new lot," and my grandfather waited with the four four-ounce packages which had been wrapped and sealed in the factory, facing the scales on which someone had left the pound weight, and my grandfather took the four packages of coffee, put them on the empty scale, and his heart thudded as he

**17** watched the black finger of justice come to rest on the left of the black line: the scale with the pound weight stayed down, and the pound of coffee remained up in the air; his heart thudded more than if he had been lying behind a

**18** bush in the forest waiting for Bilgan the Giant, and he felt in his pocket for the pebbles he always carried with him so he could use his catapult to shoot the sparrows which pecked away at his mother's cabbage plants—he had to put three, four, five pebbles beside the packages of coffee before the scale with the pound weight rose and the pointer at last came to rest over the black line. My grandfather took the coffee from the scale, wrapped the five pebbles in his kerchief, and when Gertrud came back with the big kilo bag of lemon drops which had to last for another whole year in order to make the children's faces light up with pleasure,

**19** when Gertrud let the lemon drops rattle into

### 13

**Characterization.** Grandfather as a boy is described in heroic terms. An example of direct characterization.

### 14

**Characterization.** Boy is ambitious and meticulous. Indicated by careful bookkeeping. Example of indirect characterization.

### 15

Sequence of events begins on New Year's Eve in 1900 when the boy is twelve years old.

### 16

**Plot.** Incident of weighing coffee marks beginning of series of crucial events.

### 17

Again "justice" is ironically associated with exploitation.

### 18

In fact, Baleks are more frightening than the legendary giant, for they have power to take livelihood from peasants.

### 19

Image of children's happy faces contrasts with Baleks' dishonesty.

20

**Characterization.** Boy's refusing coffee and stomping lemon-drop treat reveal his indignation and determined spirit.

21

Gertrud reminds boy of Balek's new title, indicating that failure to use it shows lack of respect.

22

Boy uses excuse of going to see priest to get permission to leave on his mission of finding scales to weigh his pebbles.

23

The apothecary, or druggist, was permitted to have scales for his trade; used scales in weighing medicinal ingredients.

24

**Characterization.** Boy's indignation at injustice is more overwhelming than his hunger.

25

**What does the druggist's use of a low voice suggest?** That he knows reason boy wants pebbles weighed.

26

Boy is able to support his case because he has kept careful records; he fears other children will not be able to prove amount owed them.

27

Narrator builds tension by not immediately telling readers the family's reaction to the news.

the glass jar, the pale little fellow was still standing there, and nothing seemed to have changed. My grandfather only took three of the packages, then Gertrud looked in startled surprise at the white-faced child who threw the lemon drop onto the floor, ground it under his heel, and said: "I want to see Frau Balek."

21 "Balek von Bilgan, if you please," said Gertrud.

"All right, Frau Balek von Bilgan," but Gertrud only laughed at him, and he walked back to the village in the dark, took the Cechs, the Weidlers and the Vohlas their coffee, and said he had to go and see the priest.

22 Instead he went out into the dark night with his five pebbles in his kerchief. He had to walk a long way before he found someone who had scales, who was permitted to have them; no one in the villages of Blaugau and Bernau had any, he knew that, and he went straight through them till, after two hours' walking, he reached the little town of Dielheim where 23 Honig the apothecary lived. From Honig's house came the smell of fresh pancakes, and Honig's breath, when he opened the door to the half-frozen boy, already smelled of punch, there was a moist cigar between his narrow lips, and he clasped the boy's cold hands firmly for a moment, saying: "What's the matter, has your father's lung got worse?"

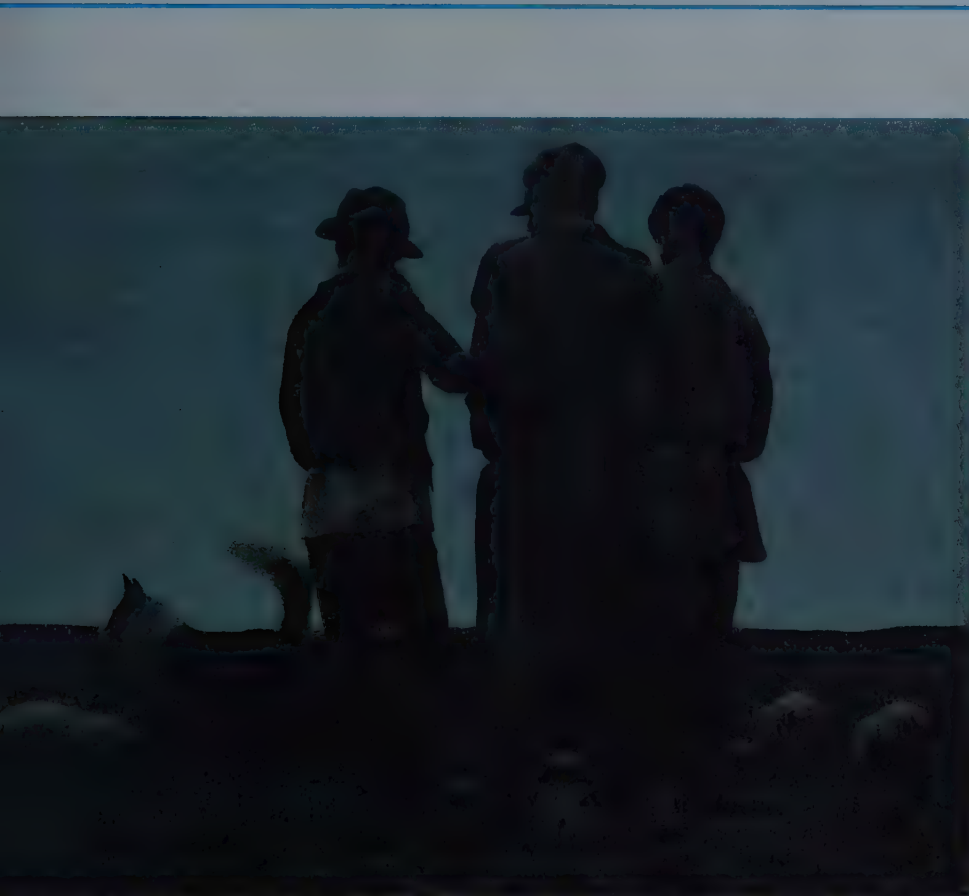
"No, I haven't come for medicine, I wanted . . ." My grandfather undid his kerchief, took out the five pebbles, held them out to Honig and said: "I wanted to have these weighed." He glanced anxiously into Honig's face, but when Honig said nothing and did not get angry, or even ask him anything, my grandfather said: "It is the amount that is short of justice," and now, as he went into the warm room, my grandfather realized how wet his feet were. The snow had soaked through his cheap shoes, and in the forest the branches had showered him with snow which was now

melting, and he was tired and hungry and suddenly began to cry because he thought of the quantities of mushrooms, the herbs, the flowers, which had been weighed on the scales which were short five pebbles' worth of justice. And when Honig, shaking his head and holding the five pebbles, called his wife, my grandfather thought of the generations of his parents, his grandparents, who had all had to have their mushrooms, their flowers, weighed 24 on the scales, and he was overwhelmed by a great wave of injustice, and began to sob louder than ever, and, without waiting to be asked, he sat down on a chair, ignoring the pancakes, the cup of hot coffee which nice plump Frau Honig put in front of him, and did not stop crying till Honig himself came out from the shop at the back and, rattling the pebbles in his hand, said in a low voice to his wife: 25 "Fifty-five grams, exactly."

My grandfather walked the two hours home through the forest, got a beating at home, said nothing, not a single word, when he was asked 26 about the coffee, spent the whole evening doing sums on the piece of paper on which he had written down everything he had sold to Frau Balek, and when midnight struck, and the cannon could be heard from the château, and the whole village rang with shouting and laughter and the noise of rattles, when the family kissed and embraced all round, he said into the New Year silence: "The Baleks owe me eighteen marks and thirty-two pfennigs." And again he thought of all the children there were in the village, of his brother Fritz who had gathered so many mushrooms, of his sister Ludmilla; he thought of the many hundreds of children who had all gathered mushrooms for the Baleks, and herbs and flowers, and this time he did not cry but told his parents and 27 brothers and sisters of his discovery.

When the Baleks von Bilgan went to High Mass on New Year's Day, their new coat of





*Three Shepherds* (1955) by Alex Colville. Tempera.

The Hallmark Card Collection, Kansas City

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Alex Colville (1920– ) is a Canadian painter and art teacher. He served in World War II in Europe as a war artist, where he sketched and painted scenes in a style that became increasingly realistic. After the war, Colville returned to Canada and took up painting full time. Many of his paintings border on photorealism—the school of artists who reproduce a subject so perfectly that it is almost indiscernible from a photograph.

### About the Artwork

Tempera, a popular medieval art medium made from pigment mixed with egg yolk, preceded the use of oil paint. Tempera is used today to achieve a stylistic effect. In *Three Shepherds*, the effect is of a scene that resembles an underexposed photograph taken on a cold, gray dawn.

28

Use of Bilgan name and coat of arms reflects power and stature of Baleks in relation to peasants.

29

**Characterization.** Peasants show that, although dependent on Baleks for living, they have pride enough to reveal feelings about injustice.

30

**Conflict.** Confrontation with Frau Balek represents larger conflict between justice and injustice in this society.

28 arms—a giant crouching under a fir tree—already emblazoned in blue and gold on their carriage, they saw the hard, pale faces of the people all staring at them. They had expected garlands in the village, a song in their honor, cheers and hurrahs, but the village was completely deserted as they drove through it, and in church the pale faces of the people were turned toward them, mute and hostile, and when the priest mounted the pulpit to deliver his New Year's sermon he sensed the chill in those otherwise quiet and peaceful faces, and

he stumbled painfully through his sermon and went back to the altar drenched in sweat. And as the Baleks von Bilgan left the church after Mass, they walked through a lane of mute, pale faces. But young Frau Balek von Bilgan stopped in front of the children's pews, sought out my grandfather's face, pale little Franz Brücher, and asked him, right there in the church: "Why didn't you take the coffee for your mother?" And my grandfather stood up and said: "Because you owe me as much money as five kilos of coffee would cost." And

31

**Allusion.** Refers to crucifixion of Christ; suggests justice of this world is frequently unjust. Reinforces theme.

32

Baleks' records are used to determine amount owed the children.

33

**Climax.** Baleks' response to challenge to their power is violent repression.

34

Considering the odds stacked against them, the peasants' revolt is very brave.

35

*Do you think the Baleks corrected the scales?* Responses will vary. It doesn't matter: peasants pay no attention since the Baleks still hold power and can do as they like.

36

**Irony.** Those who deserve to suffer least suffer the most.

## READING CHECK

1. Children did dishes, tidied house, peeled potatoes, hunted for mushrooms, herbs, and hayflowers (p. 181).
2. No one but Baleks could own scales (p. 182).
3. Transactions with Baleks recorded on back of calendar page (p. 183).
4. To weigh pebbles (p. 184).
5. By gendarmes; people threatened with prison (p. 186).

he pulled the five pebbles from his pocket, held them out to the young woman and said: "This much, fifty-five grams, is short in every pound of your justice"; and before the woman could say anything the men and women in the church lifted up their voices and sang: "The justice of this earth, O Lord, hath put Thee to death. . . ."

31

While the Baleks were at church, Wilhelm 36 Vohla, the poacher, had broken into the little 32 room, stolen the scales and the big fat leather-bound book in which had been entered every kilo of mushrooms, every kilo of hayflowers, everything bought by the Baleks in the village, and all afternoon of that New Year's Day the men of the village sat in my great-grandparents' front room and calculated, calculated one tenth of everything that had been 33 bought—but when they had calculated many thousands of talers<sup>6</sup> and had still not come to an end, the reeve's gendarmes<sup>7</sup> arrived, made their way into my great-grandfather's front room, shouting and stabbing as they came, and removed the scales and the book by force. My grandfather's little sister Ludmilla lost her life, a few men were wounded, and one of the gendarmes was stabbed to death by Wilhelm Vohla the poacher.

34

Our village was not the only one to rebel: Blaugau and Bernau did too, and for almost a week no work was done in the flax sheds. But a great many gendarmes appeared, and the men and women were threatened with prison, and the Baleks forced the priest to display the scales publicly in the school and demonstrate 35 that the finger of justice swing to and fro accurately. And the men and women went back to the flax sheds—but no one went to the school to watch the priest: he stood there all alone, helpless and forlorn with his weights, scales, and packages of coffee.

6. **talers** (tä'lörz): silver coins.

7. **gendarmes** (zhän'därmz): a semimilitary police force.

And the children went back to gathering mushrooms, to gathering thyme, flowers and foxglove, but every Sunday, as soon as the Baleks entered the church, the hymn was struck up: "The justice of this earth, O Lord, hath put Thee to death," until the reeve ordered it proclaimed in every village that the singing of the hymn was forbidden.

My grandfather's parents had to leave the village, and the new grave of their little daughter; they became basket weavers, but did not stay long anywhere because it pained them to see how everywhere the finger of justice swung falsely. They walked along behind their cart, which crept slowly over the country roads, taking their thin goat with them, and passers-by could sometimes hear a voice from the cart singing: "The justice of this earth, O Lord, hath put Thee to death." And those who wanted to listen could hear the tale of the Baleks von Bilgan, whose justice lacked a tenth part. But there were few who listened.

## Reading Check

1. How were the children kept employed while their parents worked in the flax sheds?
2. What law had the Baleks imposed on the village?
3. What kind of record was kept by the narrator's grandfather?
4. Why did the narrator's grandfather go to the home of Honig the apothecary?
5. How was the rebellion of the villagers suppressed?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The narrator is telling a story about his grandfather's boyhood in a small village in Europe. **a.** What impression do you get of these villagers and the way that they lived? **b.** How would you describe their attitude toward the laws imposed by the Baleks?

2. The Balek family becomes known as Balek von Bilgan, after the giant Bilgan. Recall what you know about wicked giants in folk stories. **a.** In what way is the Balek family like such giants? **b.** How does such a comparison make clear the narrator's attitude toward the Baleks?

3. In the central incident of the story, the narrator's grandfather, Franz Brücher, makes an important discovery. **a.** What does he learn about the Balek scales? **b.** What do you know about his character that prepares you for his subsequent actions?

4**a.** After the villagers learn of Franz's discovery, what happens? **b.** Do you feel that the story's ending is the logical outcome of earlier events? Give reasons for your answer.

5. As you read "The Balek Scales," you probably began to realize that it is not simply about one group of people in one village. The story also expresses a **theme**, a general idea about life. Try to state the theme of this story in a sentence or two. As you formulate the theme, keep in mind the story's ending as well as the words of the hymn that the villagers sing.

6. Throughout the story the narrator uses irony to point up the contrast between appearance and reality. Find examples of this irony in the story and tell how it serves to reinforce the theme.

## Literary Elements

### Expressing A Theme

If you have already read "The Gift of the Magi," you have found that O. Henry explicitly states the theme of the story in the final paragraph. Heinrich Böll makes no such explicit statement. Yet passages and details throughout the story help make readers aware that a general idea is being expressed through specific incidents. The general idea, or theme, concerns justice and injustice on earth. Notice how, near the end of the story, a reference to Bilgan the Giant emphasizes the unjust relationship between the Baleks and the people in the village.

When the Baleks von Bilgan went to High Mass on New Year's Day, their new coat of arms—a giant crouching under a fir tree—already emblazoned in blue and gold on their carriage, they saw the hard, pale faces of the people all staring at them (pages 184–185).

The people have already learned how the Baleks have cheated them for five generations. The image of a wicked giant crouching under a tree, waiting to ambush the unwary traveler, suggests both the power and the unjust actions of the Baleks.

### 1 How do the following passages help express the story's theme?

**a** There on the table stood the great Balek scales . . . which my grandfather's grandparents had already faced when they were children, . . . breathlessly watching the number of weights Frau Balek had to throw on the scale before the swinging pointer came to rest exactly over the black line, that thin line of justice which had to be redrawn every year (page 182).

**b** One of the laws imposed by the Baleks on the village was: No one was permitted to have any scales in the house. The law was so ancient that nobody gave a thought as to when and how it had arisen . . . (page 182).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1**a.** Opinions may vary. People are hard-working, poor, and oppressed, but cheerful. 1**b.** Responses may vary. At first, people accept laws as traditional and inescapable.

2**a.** Use their power to scare people and rob them. 2**b.** Shows Baleks as cruel, powerful oppressors.

3**a.** Not accurate; people have been cheated. 3**b.** He is brave (not afraid of giant) and resourceful (keeps careful records).

4**a.** Villagers rebel against Baleks; after a violent clash with gendarmes, they are intimidated into sullen submission. Franz's sister is killed; family is forced from their home. 4**b.** Opinions will vary. Penalties for breaking laws are severe; system allows little recourse to peasants.

5. Answers will vary. The powerful define justice to suit themselves; those who seek justice may suffer for the effort.

6. Baleks grow rich from villagers' work but do nothing to help them; Baleks, not villagers, make money on herbs; priest must do Baleks' bidding; Baleks give small treats but are cheating villagers.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1**a.** Passage specifically equates scales with dispensation of justice.

1**b.** Passage makes clear that Baleks have reserved for themselves power to administer "justice"; implies that unjust relationship between rich and poor is long-standing state of affairs.



1c. Passage drives home the true nature of Baleks' "justice." Other passages that students may cite: "My grandfather was the first person . . ." (p. 182). "And when Honig, shaking his head . . ." (p. 184). ". . . and the Baleks forced the priest . . ." (p. 186). "And those who wanted to listen . . ." (p. 186). Students may cite additional passages that develop the theme of story.

#### LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1a. *Presiding*: exercising authority or control.

1b. *Flouted*: scorned.

1c. *Emblazoned*: richly ornamented; *conferred*: bestowed.

1d. *Catapult*: a slingshot.

1e. *Garlands*: decorations, wreaths of flowers.

#### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

This should invite a variety of student responses. You may wish to use it as an essay question on a test.

#### NARRATIVE WRITING

You might choose a few examples from students' writing in *The Literary Cavalcade* or a school literary magazine. The suggestions for these sentences on p. 189 are helpful.

- c My grandfather undid his kerchief, took out the five pebbles, held them out to Honig and said: "I wanted to have these weighed." He glanced anxiously into Honig's face, but when Honig said nothing and did not get angry, or even ask him anything, my grandfather said: "It is the amount that is short of justice" . . . (page 184).

Find other passages in "The Balek Scales" that help make readers aware of the story's theme.

Year's Day call and on whom the Emperor *conferred* a title on the first day of the year 1900.

- d . . . he felt in his pocket for the pebbles he always carried with him so he could use his *catapult* to shoot the sparrows . . .
- e They had expected *garlands* in the village, a song in their honor, cheers and hurrahs, but the village was completely deserted as they drove through it . . .

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Using Context Clues

Sometimes the meaning of a word is clear because of the context in which it appears. For example, the meanings of *ornate* and *contraption* are clear because of clues in the rest of this passage:

There on the table stood the great Balek scales, an old-fashioned, *ornate* bronze-gilt *contraption* . . .

"Bronze-gilt" suggests decoration, so one can guess that *ornate* means "heavily decorated." The phrase "an old-fashioned, ornate bronze-gilt contraption" is another way of describing "the great Balek scales," so it is evident that a *contraption* is some kind of object, or more specifically a device or gadget.

- 1 Use context clues to determine the meaning of the italicized words in these other passages from the story. You may check your answers in the glossary or in a dictionary.

- a . . . when Frau Balek—whichever one happened to be *presiding* over the little room—was in a good mood, she would put her hand into this jar and give each child a lemon drop . . .
- b True, there were some among these quiet people who *flouted* the law, poachers bent on making more money in one night than they could earn in a whole month in the flax sheds . . .
- c . . . the local reeve, in his carriage *emblazoned* with the Imperial coat of arms, made an annual New

#### CLOSURE

Ask students to demonstrate how irony contributes to theme in "The Balek Scales."

### Writing About Literature

#### Discussing a Symbol

Write a brief essay in which you discuss the symbolic meaning of the Balek scales. Take into account what the scales look like, how old they are, and how they are used. Show the connection between the symbol and the general idea, or theme, of the story.

### Narrative Writing

#### Writing a Sentence That Builds to a Climax

When the narrator tells about his grandfather going home on New Year's Eve and finally declaring that the Baleks owe me eighteen marks and thirty-two pfennigs.

My grandfather walked the two hours home through the forest, got a beating at home, said nothing, not a single word, when he was asked about the coffee, spent the whole evening doing some sums on the piece of paper on which he had written down everything he had sold to Frau Balek, and when midnight struck, and the cannon could be heard from the château, and the whole village rang with shouting and laughter and the noise of rattles, when the family kissed and embraced all round, he said into the New Year silence: "The Baleks owe me eighteen marks and thirty-two pfennigs."

Notice how all the details of the sentence build to a high point, the boy's outburst. You have a sense of the boy's outrage building up

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Many students will have seen pictures of the blindfolded goddess of justice holding scales in one hand. Some may wish to research the use of scales as a symbol of justice throughout the centuries and write reports. The class may enjoy

discussing in what ways the Brücher family becomes like Diogenes, the Greek cynic philosopher who supposedly searched with a lantern in daylight for an honest man, while the Brüchers seek justice. Ask students whether they think that people looking for justice would have diffi-

culty today. Request that they support their opinions with examples.

Advanced students may enjoy two of Böll's novels, *Billiards at Half-Past Nine* and *Safety Net*. Others may enjoy reading one or more selections from *The Stories of Heinrich Böll*.

through the evening in dramatic contrast to the merriment of the villagers, who are still innocent of the truth.

Write your own climactic sentence, using details that build to a high point at the end. (Your sentence need not be as long as Böll's.) Choose your own subject or use one of the following:

A racer beginning slowly, gaining speed, and coming to the finish line

Two students trying to pass each other in a narrow school corridor

Paul Revere riding to warn the colonists about the British

The last few minutes of a basketball (hockey, football, tennis) game where the score is tied

### About the Author

Heinrich Böll (1917–1985)



Heinrich Böll (bœl) was born in Cologne, Germany. He served in the German army during World War II, mostly on the Russian front, and was wounded four times.

After his release from a prisoner-of-war camp in 1945, he returned to Cologne. There he found a job with the city government and began to write. In his novels and short stories, Böll probed the nature of German society.

In 1972 Böll was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for his contributions "to a renewal of German literature." Critics have noted a strong vein of ironic humor that runs through his basically serious work. One German critic has called him "Germany's best as well as best-selling author whose work is both profound and eminently readable."

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

During the German "Economic Miracle" following World War II, the country and the people themselves rose from the rubble to create a new society. Böll claimed that it was not pleasant to be a German in those years, but he refused to ignore the problems that beset his country. Böll mercilessly analyzed the war and its effect on the common people, and he did this in a terse, minimalistic style that was a radical departure from the florid prose of classical German literature. His best writing denounced militarism and hypocrisy, and Böll often professed a desire to "maintain lost values" through his work.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to interpret events and attitudes in "The Necklace" that are important to the story's **theme**. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 197 will give students practice in using words from "The Necklace" in their own sentences.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to consider these questions as they read: What could such a woman as Mme. Loisel do to appear in dazzling splendor for a single evening? Does the heroine pay too high a price for her social triumph?

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the character of Mathilde. Encourage students to note the details that indicate de Maupassant's attitude toward her. Ask them to note any details that might be used as evidence for a different interpretation of Mathilde's character.

### The Necklace

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of events and their significance to **theme**.

1

**Exposition.** Initial information about protagonist's family background; also gives information about contemporary culture.

2

**Characterization.** Protagonist is shown as one who longs for wealthy life style; contrast with her real life.

3

**Characterization.** Husband's words indicate that he is, unlike his wife, optimistic and happy with his life.

4

Loisels' simple supper is a contrast to Mme. Loisel's dream of lavish dinner party.

# The Necklace

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

*As you read this famous short story, note the author's attitude toward his central character. Do you share his attitude or do you have a different opinion about the character?*

1 She was one of those pretty and charming girls, born, as if by an accident of fate, into a family of clerks. With no dowry, no prospects, no way of any kind of being met, understood, loved, and married by a man both prosperous and famous, she was finally married to a minor clerk in the Ministry of Education.

She dressed plainly because she could not afford fine clothes, but was as unhappy as a woman who has come down in the world; for women have no family rank or social class. With them, beauty, grace, and charm take the place of birth and breeding. Their natural poise, their instinctive good taste, and their mental cleverness are the sole guiding principles which make daughters of the common people the equals of ladies in high society.

2 She grieved incessantly, feeling that she had been born for all the little niceties and luxuries of living. She grieved over the shabbiness of her apartment, the dinginess of the walls, the worn-out appearance of the chairs, the ugliness of the draperies. All these things, which another woman of her class would not even have noticed, gnawed at her and made her furious. The sight of the little Breton<sup>1</sup> girl who did her humble housework roused in her dis-

consolate regrets and wild daydreams. She would dream of silent chambers, draped with Oriental tapestries and lighted by tall bronze floor lamps, and of two handsome butlers in knee breeches, who, drowsy from the heavy warmth cast by the central stove, dozed in large overstuffed armchairs.

She would dream of great reception halls hung with old silks, of fine furniture filled with priceless curios, and of small, stylish, scented sitting rooms just right for the four o'clock chat with intimate friends, with distinguished and sought-after men whose attention every woman envies and longs to attract.

When dining at the round table, covered for the third day with the same cloth, opposite her husband, who would raise the cover of the soup tureen, declaring delightedly, "Ah! a good stew! There's nothing I like better . . ." she would dream of fashionable dinner parties, of gleaming silverware, of tapestries making the walls alive with characters out of history and strange birds in a fairyland forest; she would dream of delicious dishes served on wonderful china, of gallant compliments whispered and listened to with a sphinxlike smile as one eats the rosy flesh of a trout or nibbles at the wings of a grouse.

She had no evening clothes, no jewels, noth-

1. **Breton** (brët'n): a native of Brittany, a province in northwestern France.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 19 / Selection Test 19 / Reading Check 19 / Vocabulary Test 11 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 19



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Pretty Mathilde Loisel is the wife of a minor clerk, but she dreams of a wealthy life. When her husband brings home an invitation to an evening reception, Mathilde, wishing to be a sensation, borrows a beautiful necklace from a rich friend.

The events of the evening result in a drastic change that Mathilde has not anticipated.

## PRESENTATION

The discussion questions in the textbook are planned to guide a conventional interpretation of this story, that values should be human and spiritual, and not extravagantly materialistic.

Older students sometimes look at "The Neck-

ing. But those were the things she wanted; she felt that was the kind of life for her. She so much longed to please, be envied, be fascinating and sought after.

She had a well-to-do friend, a classmate of convent-school days whom she would no longer go to see, simply because she would feel so distressed on returning home. And she would weep for days on end from vexation, regret, despair, and anguish.

Then one evening, her husband came home proudly holding out a large envelope.

"Look," he said, "I've got something for you."

She excitedly tore open the envelope and pulled out a printed card bearing these words:

"The Minister of Education and Mme. Georges Ramponneau<sup>2</sup> beg M. and Mme. Loisel<sup>3</sup> to do them the honor of attending an evening reception at the Ministerial Mansion on Friday, January 18."

Instead of being delighted, as her husband had hoped, she scornfully tossed the invitation on the table, murmuring, "What good is that to me?"

"But, my dear, I thought you'd be thrilled to death. You never get a chance to go out, and this is a real affair, a wonderful one! I had an awful time getting a card. Everybody wants one; it's much sought after, and not many clerks have a chance at one. You'll see all the most important people there."

She gave him an irritated glance and burst out impatiently, "What do you think I have to go in?"

He hadn't given that a thought. He stammered, "Why, the dress you wear when we go to the theater. That looks quite nice, I think."

He stopped talking, dazed and distracted to see his wife burst out weeping. Two large tears slowly rolled from the corners of her eyes to the corners of her mouth; he gasped, "Why, what's the matter? What's the trouble?"

By sheer will power she overcame her outburst and answered in a calm voice while wiping the tears from her wet cheeks:

"Oh, nothing. Only I don't have an evening dress and therefore I can't go to that affair. Give the card to some friend at the office whose wife can dress better than I can."

He was stunned. He resumed, "Let's see, Mathilde.<sup>4</sup> How much would a suitable outfit cost—one you could wear for other affairs too—something very simple?"

She thought it over for several seconds, going over her allowance and thinking also of the amount she could ask for without bringing an immediate refusal and an exclamation of dismay from the thrifty clerk.

Finally, she answered hesitatingly, "I'm not sure exactly, but I think with four hundred francs<sup>5</sup> I could manage it."

He turned a bit pale, for he had set aside just that amount to buy a rifle so that, the following summer, he could join some friends who were getting up a group to shoot larks on the plain near Nanterre.<sup>6</sup>

However, he said, "All right. I'll give you four hundred francs. But try to get a nice dress."

As the day of the party approached, Mme. Loisel seemed sad, moody, and ill at ease. Her outfit was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening, "What's the matter? You've been all out of sorts for three days."

And she answered, "It's embarrassing not to

5

**Characterization.** Her dreams of being envied emphasize her vanity. Her desire for wealth is equalled by her desire for power.

6

**Why does Mme. Loisel no longer visit her former classmate?** Jealousy of her friend's wealth makes her miserable.

7

**Complication.** First change in their life occurs with arrival of invitation to reception.

8

Loisel is well aware of his wife's dreams of wealth, but he does not anticipate her reaction to the invitation.

9

She subtly insults her husband by implying that he is not as good a provider as others in his office.

10

**Characterization.** Aware of her husband's limit, Mathilde quickly makes the most of M. Loisel's concession.

11

Typical of a nineteenth-century husband, Loisel has control of the money.

2. **Mme. Georges Ramponneau** (ma-dam' zhôrh ram' pə-nô).

3. **M. . . Loisel** (mə-syô'r' . . . lwa-zêl').

4. **Mathilde** (ma-têld').

5. **four hundred francs**: at that time, about eighty dollars.

6. **Nanterre** (nân-târ'): a town near Paris.

lace” from the perspective of the movement for women’s rights. If your ninth-graders are acquainted with this perspective, you may want to consider a different line of inquiry. What happens to a spirited woman who is constrained to one small role in life? Guy de Maupassant says

clearly in the first paragraph that Mathilde really had no choice but to marry a minor clerk. Ask your students if they believe that women today are equally limited or if they feel that women now have many different possibilities for careers and marriage partners.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The Loiseles are not poor people. They have a steady income, a small inheritance, an apartment with beds and other furniture, clothes for the theater, enough food for their table, no children to support, and even a maid to do their housework. Mme. Loisel, however, does not think of herself as fortunate. Like the woman in the painting, she is a dreamer, but her dreams cause her discontent. She longs for the luxuries and pleasures of high society, which her husband, a minor clerk in the Ministry of Education, cannot afford.

### About the Artist

Édouard Manet is associated with the Impressionists, but he remained somewhat outside their stylistic experimentations. Although he came to value strong colors and vivid light in his paintings—as did the other Impressionists—Manet never lost his belief in firm outlines and straightforward composition.

### About the Artwork

Notice that the model wears a black choker (partially concealed by her high-necked dress). Chokers came into vogue in the late nineteenth century and have been sporadically popular ever since. The choker has varied in style from a simple velvet band to a multiple row of pearls.



*Le Repos* by Édouard Manet (1832–1883). Oil on canvas.

have a jewel or a gem—nothing to wear on my  
12 dress. I'll look like a pauper: I'd almost rather  
not go to that party."

He answered, "Why not wear some flowers?  
They're very fashionable this season. For ten  
francs you can get two or three gorgeous  
roses."

She wasn't at all convinced. "No. . . . There's  
nothing more humiliating than to look poor  
among a lot of rich women."

But her husband exclaimed, "My, but you're  
13 silly! Go see your friend Mme. Forestier<sup>7</sup> and  
ask her to lend you some jewelry. You and she  
know each other well enough for you to do  
that."

She gave a cry of joy, "Why, that's so! I  
hadn't thought of it."

The next day she paid her friend a visit and  
told her of her predicament.

Mme. Forestier went toward a large closet  
with mirrored doors, took out a large jewel  
box, brought it over, opened it, and said to  
Mme. Loisel: "Pick something out, my dear."

At first her eyes noted some bracelets, then a  
pearl necklace, then a Venetian cross, gold and  
gems, of marvelous workmanship. She tried  
on these adornments in front of the mirror,  
but hesitated, unable to decide which to part  
with and put back. She kept on asking,

14 "Haven't you something else?"

"Oh, yes, keep on looking. I don't know just  
what you'd like."

15 All at once she found, in a black satin box, a  
superb diamond necklace; and her pulse beat  
faster with longing. Her hands trembled as she  
took it up. Clasp ing it around her throat, out-  
side her high-necked dress, she stood in ecstasy  
looking at her reflection.

Then she asked, hesitatingly, pleading,  
"Could I borrow that, just that and nothing  
else?"

"Why, of course."

She threw her arms around her friend,  
kissed her warmly, and fled with her treas-  
ure.

The day of the party arrived. Mme. Loisel  
16 was a sensation. She was the prettiest one  
there, fashionable, gracious, smiling, and wild  
with joy. All the men turned to look at her,  
asked who she was, begged to be introduced.  
All the Cabinet officials wanted to waltz with  
her. The minister took notice of her.

She danced madly, wildly, drunk with pleas-  
ure, giving no thought to anything in the tri-  
umph of her beauty, the pride of her success,  
in a kind of happy cloud composed of all the  
adulation, of all the admiring glances, of all the  
awakened longings, of a sense of complete vic-  
tory that is so sweet to a woman's heart.

She left around four o'clock in the morning.  
17 Her husband, since midnight, had been dozing  
in a small empty sitting room with three other  
gentlemen whose wives were having too good a  
time.

He threw over her shoulders the wraps he  
had brought for going home, modest garments  
of everyday life whose shabbiness clashed with  
the stylishness of her evening clothes. She felt  
this and longed to escape, unseen by the other  
women who were draped in expensive furs.

Loisel held her back.

"Hold on! You'll catch cold outside. I'll call a  
cab."

18 But she wouldn't listen to him and went rap-  
idly down the stairs. When they were on the  
street, they didn't find a carriage; and they set  
out to hunt for one, hailing drivers whom they  
saw going by at a distance.

They walked toward the Seine,<sup>8</sup> disconsolate  
and shivering. Finally on the docks they found  
one of those carriages that one sees in Paris  
only after nightfall, as if they were ashamed to

12

**Characterization.** Even with the new dress, Mathilde wants more; again, her vanity is emphasized.

13

**Plot.** Loisel's suggestion results in events that ultimately change the couple's lives.

14

Mathilde's desires seem insatiable as she repeatedly asks her friend for "something else."

15

**Symbol.** Diamond necklace symbolizes all Mathilde has dreamed of—beauty and wealth.

16

The necklace at her throat, Mathilde's dreams are fulfilled; she is ecstatic with joy.

17

**Characterization.** Loisel does not seem threatened by his wife's flirtations, suggesting that he feels secure in their relationship.

18

**Why does Mathilde rush away? What does this suggest about her character?** She does not want anyone to see her shabby coat. She is a vain, proud woman.

7. **Forestier** (fô-rə-styā').

8. **Seine** (sēn): a river that runs through Paris.



**19**  
**Characterization.** Thinking about work reflects husband's practical nature.

**20**  
**Complication.** Loss of the necklace provides a twist in the plot; Mathilde's dream ends with shattering reality.

**21**  
Dialogue heightens tension as couple realize that the necklace is gone.

**22**  
Again, Loisel proves himself to be the realist as he suggests practical steps to be taken.

**23**  
*What effect does the loss have on Loisel?* He is aged by worry.

**24**  
At that time, forty thousand francs was about eight thousand dollars; thirty-six thousand was about seventy-two hundred dollars.

**25**  
As family financier, Loisel faces responsibility of borrowing money.

show their drabness during daylight hours.

It dropped them at their door in the Rue des Martyrs, and they climbed wearily up to their apartment. For her, it was all over. For him, there was the thought that he would have to be at the Ministry at ten o'clock.

Before the mirror, she let the wraps fall from her shoulders to see herself once again in all her glory. Suddenly she gave a cry. The necklace was gone.

Her husband, already half undressed, said, "What's the trouble?"

She turned toward him despairingly, "I . . . I . . . I don't have Mme. Forestier's necklace." "What! You can't mean it! It's impossible!"

They hunted everywhere, through the folds of the dress, through the folds of the coat, in the pockets. They found nothing.

He asked, "Are you sure you had it when leaving the dance?"

"Yes, I felt it when I was in the hall of the Ministry."

"But if you had lost it on the street we'd have heard it drop. It must be in the cab."

"Yes, Quite likely. Did you get its number?"

"No. Didn't you notice it either?"

"No."

They looked at each other aghast. Finally Loisel got dressed again.

"I'll retrace our steps on foot," he said, "to see if I can find it."

And he went out. She remained in her evening clothes, without the strength to go to bed, slumped in a chair in the unheated room, her mind a blank.

Her husband came in about seven o'clock. He had had no luck.

He went to the police station, to the newspapers to post a reward, to the cab companies, everywhere the slightest hope drove him.

That evening Loisel returned, pale, his face lined; still he had learned nothing.

"We'll have to write your friend," he said, "to

tell her you have broken the catch and are having it repaired. That will give us a little time to turn around."

She wrote to his dictation.

At the end of a week, they had given up all hope.

And Loisel, looking five years older, declared, "We must take steps to replace that piece of jewelry."

The next day they took the case to the jeweler whose name they found inside. He consulted his records. "I didn't sell that necklace, madame," he said. "I only supplied the case."

Then they went from one jeweler to another hunting for a similar necklace, going over their recollections, both sick with despair and anxiety.

They found, in a shop in Palais Royal,<sup>9</sup> a string of diamonds which seemed exactly like the one they were seeking. It was priced at forty thousand francs. They could get it for thirty-six.

They asked the jeweler to hold it for them for three days. And they reached an agreement that he would take it back for thirty-four thousand if the lost one was found before the end of February.

Loisel had eighteen thousand francs he had inherited from his father. He would borrow the rest.

He went about raising the money, asking a thousand francs from one, four hundred from another, a hundred here, sixty there. He signed notes, made ruinous deals, did business with loan sharks, ran the whole gamut of moneylenders. He compromised the rest of his life, risked his signature without knowing if he'd be able to honor it, and then, terrified by the outlook for the future, by the blackness of despair about to close around him, by the pros-

9. **Palais Royal** (pá-lá' rwá-yál'): a section of Paris with fashionable stores.

pect of all the privations of the body and tortures of the spirit, he went to claim the new necklace with the thirty-six thousand francs which he placed on the counter of the shopkeeper.

When Mme. Loisel took the necklace back, Mme. Forestier said to her frostily, "You should have brought it back sooner; I might have needed it."

She didn't open the case, an action her friend was afraid of. If she had noticed the substitution, what would she have thought? What would she have said? Would she have thought her a thief?

Mme. Loisel experienced the horrible life the needy live. She played her part, however, with sudden heroism. That frightful debt had to be paid. She would pay it. She dismissed her maid; they rented a garret under the eaves.

She learned to do the heavy housework, to perform the hateful duties of cooking. She washed dishes, wearing down her shell-pink nails scouring the grease from pots and pans; she scrubbed dirty linen, shirts, and cleaning rags which she hung on a line to dry; she took the garbage down to the street each morning and brought up water, stopping on each landing to get her breath. And, clad like a peasant woman, basket on arm, guarding sou<sup>10</sup> by sou her scanty allowance, she bargained with the fruit dealers, the grocer, the butcher, and was insulted by them.

Each month notes had to be paid, and others renewed to give more time.

Her husband labored evenings to balance a tradesman's accounts, and at night, often, he copied documents at five sous a page.

And this went on for ten years.

Finally, all was paid back, everything includ-

ing the exorbitant rates of the loan sharks and accumulated compound interest.

Mme. Loisel appeared an old woman, now. She became heavy, rough, harsh, like one of the poor. Her hair untended, her skirts askew, her hands red, her voice shrill, she even slopped water on her floors and scrubbed them herself. But, sometimes, while her husband was at work, she would sit near the window and think of that long-ago evening when, at the dance, she had been so beautiful and admired.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows? Who can say?

How strange and unpredictable life is! How little there is between happiness and misery!

Then one Sunday when she had gone for a walk on the Champs Élysées<sup>11</sup> to relax a bit from the week's labors, she suddenly noticed a woman strolling with a child. It was Mme. Forestier, still young-looking; still beautiful, still charming.

Mme. Loisel felt a rush of emotion. Should she speak to her? Of course. And now that everything was paid off, she would tell her the whole story. Why not?

She went toward her. "Hello, Jeanne."

The other, not recognizing her, showed astonishment at being spoken to so familiarly by this common person. She stammered, "But . . . madame . . . I don't recognize . . . You must be mistaken."

"No, I'm Mathilde Loisel."

Her friend gave a cry, "Oh, my poor Mathilde, how you've changed!"

"Yes, I've had a hard time since last seeing you. And plenty of misfortunes—and all on account of you!"

"Of me . . . How do you mean?"

26

Irony. If Mme. Forestier had opened the case, she would have discovered a much more valuable necklace than the one she loaned Mathilde.

27

Mathilde suffers drastic change in her life style because of one glamorous evening.

28

What do the words "sudden heroism" indicate about Mathilde? She is no longer consumed with her own dreams and desires.

29

In addition to living in poorer quarters, Loisel sacrifices further by working at night.

30

Characterization. Mathilde is transformed; not only does her attitude change, her physical appearance changes as well.

31

Narrator comments on role chance plays in human affairs.

32

Mme. Loisel now feels she has nothing to lose by telling the truth.

10. **sou** (sō): a coin then worth about one cent.

11. **Champs Élysées** (shan' zā-lē-zā'): the main avenue of Paris.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to contrast the attitudes of Mathilde and her husband.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

If the class has already read "The Balek Scales," have students compare it with "The Necklace." Both stories use **symbols** to suggest related ideas. Ask students what related ideas the scales suggest (justice and the distortion of justice on

earth) and what ideas the necklace suggests (an obsession with wealth and opulence and the falseness of such a set of values). Have students consider whether each story would be less effective without its symbol. Students should see that by using a specific object with traditional conno-

33

Irony. Loiseis worked for ten years to replace a necklace that was only paste.

## READING CHECK

1. Feels she has no clothes to wear (p. 191).
2. Is highly admired (p. 193).
3. When she takes coat off at home (p. 194).
4. Says that catch is broken and must be repaired (p. 194).
5. It was made of paste (p. 196).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Wishes to marry wealthy man, but instead marries clerk. Would prefer dinner parties to stew supper. Many others.
- 2a. He is stunned, reluctant.
- 2b. Opinions may vary. Mathilde is extravagant; her husband is thrifty.
- 3a. Will look like pauper without it. 3b. Opinions may vary. Wish for jewels seems foolish and vain.
- 3c. Most extravagant piece she finds.
- 4a. She is happy at party but wants to leave quickly before other women see her shabby wraps. 4b. He wants to wait for cab, but she hurries out into cold.
- 4c. They ride home in a drab carriage.
- 5a. Look for it, borrow money to replace it. 5b. Opinions may vary. Honesty, foolishness. Many others. 5c. They may fear disgrace.
- 6a. Becomes hard-working and thrifty. 6b. No longer seems vain and silly. Works hard and disregards her personal appearance.
7. Mathilde works hard to replace necklace, only to discover it was false. Necklace symbolizes Mathilde's false values.
- 8a. Considers her vain and petulant. 8b. Opinions may vary. Author's attitude seems to grow kinder.

"Do you remember that diamond necklace you loaned me to wear to the dance at the Ministry?"

"Yes, but what about it?"

"Well, I lost it."

"You lost it! But you returned it."

"I brought you another just like it. And we've been paying for it for ten years now. You can imagine that wasn't easy for us who had nothing. Well, it's over now, and I am glad of it."

Mme. Forestier stopped short. "You mean to say you bought a diamond necklace to replace mine?"

"Yes. You never noticed, then? They were quite alike."

And she smiled with proud and simple joy.

Mme. Forestier, quite overcome, clasped her 33 by the hands. "Oh, my poor Mathilde. But mine was only paste.<sup>12</sup> Why, at most it was worth only five hundred francs!"

12. **paste**: a brilliant, glassy material used in imitation diamonds.

## Reading Check

1. Why is Mme. Loisel unhappy when she receives an invitation to an evening reception?
2. How are Mme. Loisel's dreams realized at the party?
3. At what point does she become aware that the necklace is gone?
4. What excuse does she give her friend for not returning the necklace immediately?
5. What does she finally learn about the necklace?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. The first six paragraphs of the story tell about the life Madame Loisel wishes to lead and the life she really leads. What details bring out this contrast?

2. Madame Loisel wishes to have an expensive dress for the reception. **a.** How does her husband react to her wish? **b.** What does this incident reveal about the values of Madame Loisel and of her husband?

3a. What reason does Madame Loisel give for needing a jewel to go with her dress? **b.** Do you think her concern is reasonable or foolish? **c.** Why does she choose the necklace rather than any of the other pieces of jewelry?

4a. At the reception, what incident shows the contrast between Madame Loisel's apparent situation in life and her true situation?

**b.** What incident contrasts her values with her husband's values? **c.** After the Loiseis leave to go home, what incident suggests a return to her true life?

5a. What actions do the Loiseis take to replace the necklace? **b.** What qualities of character are revealed by these actions? **c.** Why do you think they do not tell Madame Forestier that they have lost the necklace?

6a. How does Madame Loisel's character change as a result of the hardships she has to endure? **b.** Do you think her values change? Give reasons for your answer.

7. "The Necklace" is famous for its surprise ending. How does the surprise drive home the story's theme—the underlying idea about true and false values?

8a. What is the author's attitude toward Mathilde Loisel? **b.** Does his attitude toward her change by the end of the story? Give reasons for your answer.



tations, then reversing reader expectations about that object, the author makes each story far more shocking—and effective—than it would be otherwise.

You might have advanced students write autobiographical character sketches in which they

look at their own value system. They could consider which attitudes mean the most to them, what they expect out of life, which material possessions they treasure. While sometimes difficult, this kind of introspection can be good for ninth-graders.

Some students might want to read other de Maupassant stories, such as “Le Rendezvous,” “The Umbrella,” and “En famille.”

## Literary Elements

### Implicit Theme

The theme of “The Necklace” depends upon a contrast between true values and false values. Nowhere is the contrast directly stated, nor is the author’s attitude toward Madame Loisel specifically declared. Yet readers can perceive this attitude as they learn more about Madame and Monsieur Loisel. For example, Madame Loisel’s desire for an expensive evening dress shows that she values appearances and does not consider how such an extravagance will strain her husband’s finances. Details such as this not only characterize Madame Loisel but also shape readers’ attitudes toward her and her values.

- 1 Give at least three other details that Maupassant uses to shape your attitude toward Madame Loisel and her values. Show how these details are related to the theme of the story.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Using Words with Exactness

Often, looking up a word in a dictionary is only the first step to learning its exact meaning. We must also look at the way the word is used in a specific context. Look up each italicized word in the following passages from “The Necklace.” Show that you understand the exact meaning of each word by using it in the same sense in a sentence of your own.

Their natural *poise*, their *instinctive* good taste . . . are the sole guiding principles which make daughters of the common people the equals of ladies in high society.

She grieved *incessantly* . . .

The sight of the little Breton girl who did her humble housework roused in her *disconsolate* regrets and wild daydreams.

She danced madly, wildly, drunk with pleasure, . . . in a kind of happy cloud composed of all the *adulation*, of all the admiring glances . . .

He threw over her shoulders the wraps he had brought for going home, modest garments of everyday life whose *shabbiness* clashed with the stylishness of her evening clothes.

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Comparing Themes

If you have already read “The Gift of the Magi,” write a composition comparing the theme of that story with the theme of “The Necklace.” In your composition, consider the following question: How does the theme of each story depend upon a contrast between true and false values?

## Creative Writing

### Writing a Sequel

Write a sequel to “The Necklace.” Tell how Madame Loisel reacts to the discovery that the necklace is paste. How does this discovery affect the lives of Madame Loisel and her husband?

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Dreams of dinner party while not appreciating husband’s compliments. Covets friend’s luxuries. Disdains pretty flowers her husband suggests. Many others.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Poise:** composure as an element of good manners.

**Instinctive:** natural, as opposed to learned.

**Incessantly:** without ceasing.

**Disconsolate:** gloomy, cheerless.

**Adulation:** praise, extreme flattery.

**Shabbiness:** seediness.

2. Answers will vary.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Students can draw from their recent discussion of “The Necklace” to cite the Loisels’ true and false values.

## CREATIVE WRITING

As an alternative, you might have students write an original story about a modern young person who borrows something expensive, then breaks or loses it. What, if anything, does he or she learn from the experience?

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

De Maupassant believed that the ordinary lives of the poor and the middle class provided interesting subjects for his writing. He felt that his goal as a writer wasn't just to tell a story or amuse the reader, but to get the reader to think about the subject matter. Although as a young man he took to heart Flaubert's many stylistic dicta, de Maupassant later came to believe that his most important task was simply to fill the page with words, regardless of quality. In this vein, de Maupassant influenced later writers such as Jack Kerouac and Truman Capote, who were also less concerned with style than they were with writing something—anything—down. De Maupassant claimed that no matter how hurriedly he wrote, his true literary voice would somehow be heard and understood by the reader.

### About the Author

#### Guy de Maupassant (1850–1893)



Guy de Maupassant (gē də mō-pā-săn') was born in Normandy, a province of France. After he served in the French army during the Franco-Prussian War, he went to Paris and got a job as a gov-

ernment clerk. An aspiring writer, he made friends with a number of distinguished French writers, among them Gustave Flaubert. De Maupassant became Flaubert's protégé and showed the older man many manuscripts before Flaubert decided that his young disciple was ready to publish. De Maupassant's first published story, "Ball of Fat," was acclaimed a masterpiece. By 1882, he had achieved success as a writer and was able to quit his government post. He wrote prolifically, producing sixteen volumes of short stories, six novels, and several volumes of travel sketches. It is for his short stories that De Maupassant is principally remembered. They are famous for their clear, smooth style, their compression, and their eye for telling detail. His stories reflect his knowledge of country life and small-town life in Normandy, and of fashionable and unfashionable life in Paris. Among his best-known stories are "The Piece of String," "The Duel," "At Sea," "Two Little Soldiers," and "The Diary of a Madman." De Maupassant's most famous story is "The Necklace"; it is one of the most frequently anthologized stories of all time.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the theme of "The Fifty-First Dragon." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 206 will give students practice in recognizing word relationships.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Tell students that if Gawaine had attended their school, his awards would surely occupy the most conspicuous place in the trophy case in the front hall. Unfortunately, the school has never boasted a dragon-slayer.

# The Fifty-First Dragon

**HEYWOOD BROWN**

*You have seen that a symbol—like the scarlet ibis in James Hurst's story—can have more than one meaning. Sometimes an entire story can be read on more than one level. As you read this famous story, can you detect a serious comment beneath the humor?*

Of all the pupils at the knight school Gawaine le Cœur-Hardy<sup>1</sup> was among the least promising. He was tall and sturdy, but his instructors soon discovered that he lacked spirit. He would hide in the woods when the jousting class was called, although his companions and members of the faculty sought to appeal to his better nature by shouting to him to come out and break his neck like a man. Even when they told him that the lances were padded, the horses no more than ponies, and the field unusually soft for late autumn, Gawaine refused to grow enthusiastic. The Headmaster and the Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce<sup>2</sup> were discussing the case one spring afternoon and the Assistant Professor could see no remedy but expulsion.

1. **Gawaine le Cœur-Hardy** (gă'wîn lə kûr'hâr'dē): Gawaine the Boldhearted. *Cœur* is French for "heart."

2. **Pleasaunce** (plēz'əns): Usually this word means "pleasure." Here, it probably means "courtesy."

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 20 / Selection Test 20 / Reading Check 20 / Vocabulary Test 12 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 20

"No," said the Headmaster, as he looked out at the purple hills which ringed the school, "I think I'll train him to slay dragons."

"He might be killed," objected the Assistant Professor.

"So he might," replied the Headmaster brightly, but he added, more soberly, "we must consider the greater good. We are responsible for the formation of this lad's character."

"Are the dragons particularly bad this year?" interrupted the Assistant Professor. This was characteristic. He always seemed restive when the head of the school began to talk ethics and the ideals of the institution.

"I've never known them worse," replied the Headmaster. "Up in the hills to the south last week they killed a number of peasants, two cows and a prize pig. And if this dry spell holds there's no telling when they may start a forest fire simply by breathing around indiscriminately."

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the two different levels—the humorous and the serious—that exist in this story. Humor is created by the unrealistic aspects of the story, especially the **anachronisms**, yet from the beginning the story deals with a matter of life and death.

## The Fifty-First Dragon

After students have read the story, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of **characterization** and **theme**.

**1 Characterization.** Gawaine is described as being physically capable but lacking courage.

**2 Anachronism.** Reference to "Headmaster and Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce" inconsistent with time **setting**.

**3** *What does the Headmaster imply about the importance of character?* It is more important than physical safety.

**4** Headmaster evidently considers cows and prize pig as having value equal to "a number of peasants."



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Gawaine le Coeur-Hardy is not boldhearted. He skips jousting class at Knight School and does not excel at his other studies. The Headmaster, reluctant to expel him, decides to teach Gawaine dragon-slaying. Gawaine skillfully destroys

wooden monsters in practice, and finally he receives his diploma. The Headmaster assigns Gawaine to kill a real dragon, but he is still afraid. The Headmaster gives him a magic word and sends him into the woods in search of a dragon to slay.

## PRESENTATION

A good oral reading plus a discussion based on the questions in the textbook should be pleasant for all. You might ask if anyone wants to follow in Gawaine's footsteps. Perhaps students can identify a few dragons to slay in the modern

5

**Anachronism.** Mention of "tuition fee" is out of place in tale of knights and dragons.

6

Headmaster has plan for Gawaine; his mention of a "contract" creates humor through use of anachronism.

7

Professor's response indicates that "magic words" are rather commonplace.

8

**Characterization.** Although Gawaine does not excel in studies of "theory," he does show physical prowess in applying the battle-ax.

9

**What are the others suggesting about Gawaine?** He is frightened.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Anderson's fantastic imagery could easily serve as the subject for a variety of science fiction and fantasy stories. Have students write a short story that employs the characters depicted in the drawing. What is the relationship between the beast and the warrior? Why is the beast bleeding? Have the warrior and beast fought a battle? Encourage the students to be specific about the setting for their story. Are the creatures from another planet? Or could they be Earth creatures from the distant future or past?

5 "Would any refund on the tuition fee be necessary in case of an accident to young Coeur-Hardy?"

"No," the principal answered, judicially,

6 "that's all covered in the contract. But as a matter of fact he won't be killed. Before I send him up in the hills I'm going to give him a magic word."

7 "That's a good idea," said the Professor. "Sometimes they work wonders."

From that day on Gawaine specialized in dragons. His course included both theory and practice. In the morning there were long lectures on the history, anatomy, manners and customs of dragons. Gawaine did not distinguish himself in these studies. He had a marvelously versatile gift for forgetting things. In the afternoon he showed to better advantage, for then he would go down to the South Meadow and practice with a battle-ax. In this exercise he was truly impressive, for he had enormous strength as well as speed and grace. He even developed a deceptive display of ferocity. Old alumni say that it was a thrilling sight to see Gawaine charging across the field toward the dummy paper dragon which had been set up for his practice. As he ran he would brandish his ax and shout, "A murrain<sup>3</sup> on thee!" or some other vivid bit of campus slang. It never took him more than one stroke to behead the dummy dragon.

Gradually his task was made more difficult. Paper gave way to papier-mâché<sup>4</sup> and finally to wood, but even the toughest of these dummy dragons had no terrors for Gawaine. One sweep of the ax always did the business. There were those who said that when the practice was protracted until dusk and the dragons threw long, fantastic shadows across the meadow, Gawaine did not charge so impetuously nor

3. **murrain** (mūr'in): plague.

4. **papier-mâché** (pā'pär-mə-shā'): a material made of paper pulp mixed with glue or rosin. It can be molded into different shapes when wet, and then hardens as it dries.



Drawing by Wayne Anderson

world. You might ask where the spirit for bold action comes from. Some high-school students seem to have so much of it, and others are as timorous as Gawaine without his magic word or (worse) as apathetic as George Stoyonovich in "A Summer's Reading." Maybe students will

want to differentiate between brave foolish action and brave wise action. Keep the discussion light.

Ask students if "The Fifty-First Dragon" would make an entertaining play for a puppet show or an animated cartoon. How would they visualize

the characters—Gawaine, the Headmaster, the Assistant Professor, and the dragons? If students show enthusiasm, you might consider this for a special project.

shout so loudly. It is possible there was malice in this charge. At any rate, the Headmaster decided by the end of June that it was time for

10 the test. Only the night before, a dragon had come close to the school grounds and had eaten some of the lettuce from the garden. The faculty decided that Gawaine was ready. They gave him a diploma and a new battle-ax and the Headmaster summoned him to a private conference.

11 "Sit down," said the Headmaster. "Have a cigarette."

Gawaine hesitated.

"Oh, I know it's against the rules," said the Headmaster. "But after all, you have received your preliminary degree. You are no longer a boy. You are a man. Tomorrow you will go out into the world, the great world of achievement."

Gawaine took a cigarette. The Headmaster

12 offered him a match, but he produced one of his own and began to puff away with a dexterity which quite amazed the principal.

"Here you have learned the theories of life," continued the Headmaster, resuming the thread of his discourse, "but after all, life is not a matter of theories. Life is a matter of facts. It calls on the young and the old alike to face these facts, even though they are hard and sometimes unpleasant. Your problem, for example, is to slay dragons."

13 "They say that those dragons down in the south world are five hundred feet long," ventured Gawaine, timorously.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said the Headmaster. "The curate saw one last week from the top of Arthur's Hill. The dragon was sunning himself down in the valley. The curate didn't have an opportunity to look at him very long because he felt it was his duty to hurry back to make a report to me. He said the monster—or shall I

14 say, the big lizard?—wasn't an inch over two hundred feet. But the size has nothing at all to

do with it. You'll find the big ones even easier than the little ones. They're far slower on their feet and less aggressive, I'm told. Besides, before you go I'm going to equip you in such fashion that you need have no fear of all the dragons in the world."

"I'd like an enchanted cap," said Gawaine.

"What's that?" asked the Headmaster, testily.

"A cap to make me disappear," explained Gawaine.

The Headmaster laughed indulgently. "You 15 mustn't believe all those old wives' stories," he said. "There isn't any such thing. A cap to make you disappear, indeed! What would you do with it? You haven't even appeared yet. Why, my boy, you could walk from here to London, and nobody would so much as look at you. You're nobody. You couldn't be more invisible than that."

Gawaine seemed dangerously close to a relapse into his old habit of whimpering. The

16 Headmaster reassured him: "Don't worry; I'll give you something much better than an enchanted cap. I'm going to give you a magic word. All you have to do is to repeat this magic charm once and no dragon can possibly harm a hair of your head. You can cut off his head at your leisure."

He took a heavy book from the shelf behind his desk and began to run through it. "Sometimes," he said, "the charm is a whole phrase or even a sentence. I might, for instance, give you 'To make the'—no, that might not do. I think a single word would be best for dragons."

"A short word," suggested Gawaine.

"It can't be too short or it wouldn't be potent. There isn't so much hurry as all that. Here's a splendid magic word: 'Rumplesnitz.' Do you think you can learn that?"

Gawaine tried and in an hour or so he seemed to have the word well in hand. Again and again he interrupted the lesson to inquire,

10

**Irony.** Readers expect dragons to behave fiercely, not nibble lettuce in garden like rabbits.

11

**Anachronism.** Mention of cigarette in tale set in time of knights and dragons adds humor.

12

**What does Gawaine's "dexterity" when smoking and the fact that he has matches suggest?** He has already practiced the prohibited act.

13

Gawaine does not feel quite ready to tackle a real dragon.

14

Headmaster tries to minimize size and ferocity of dragons in order to reassure Gawaine.

15

"Old wives' stories" are tales that are based on superstition rather than reliable information.

16

**Irony.** Headmaster laughs at Gawaine's mention of enchanted cap yet offers him a "magic word."

17 Gawaine seeks reassurance that he will be protected by the magic word.

18 Magic word seems to work as Gawaine easily slays his first real dragon.

19 *Why is it ironic that Headmaster is concerned about Gawaine's health?* He sends boy out to slay dragons.

20 **Characterization.** Gawaine now feels so confident that he occasionally shows off.

21 Gawaine abuses his body and mind with liquor, overestimating his ability, when hung over, to slay dragons.

22 Gawaine finds that this dragon is different; he tries to hide his disquiet by pretended nonchalance (whistling as he approaches).

17 "And if I say 'Rumplesnitz' the dragon can't possibly hurt me?" And always the Headmaster replied, "If you only say 'Rumplesnitz,' you are perfectly safe."

Toward morning Gawaine seemed resigned to his career. At daybreak the Headmaster saw him to the edge of the forest and pointed him to the direction in which he should proceed. About a mile away to the southwest a cloud of steam hovered over an open meadow in the woods and the Headmaster assured Gawaine that under the steam he would find a dragon. Gawaine went forward slowly. He wondered whether it would be best to approach the dragon on the run as he did in his practice in the South Meadow or to walk slowly toward him, shouting "Rumplesnitz" all the way.

The problem was decided for him. No sooner had he come to the fringe of the meadow than the dragon spied him and began to charge. It was a large dragon and yet it seemed decidedly aggressive in spite of the Headmaster's statement to the contrary. As the dragon charged it released huge clouds of hissing steam through its nostrils. It was almost as if a gigantic teapot had gone mad. The dragon came forward so fast and Gawaine was so frightened that he had time to say "Rumplesnitz" only once. As he said it, he swung his battle-ax and off popped the head

18 of the dragon. Gawaine had to admit that it was even easier to kill a real dragon than a wooden one if only you said "Rumplesnitz."

Gawaine brought the ears home and a small section of the tail. His schoolmates and the faculty made much of him, but the Headmaster wisely kept him from being spoiled by insisting that he go on with his work. Every clear day Gawaine rose at dawn and went out to kill dragons. The Headmaster kept him at home when it rained, because he said the woods were damp and unhealthy at such times and that he didn't want the boy to run needless risks. Few

good days passed in which Gawaine failed to get a dragon. On one particularly fortunate day he killed three, a husband and a wife and a visiting relative. Gradually he developed a technique. Pupils who sometimes watched him from the hilltops a long way off said that he often allowed the dragon to come within a few feet before he said "Rumplesnitz." He came to say it with a mocking sneer. Occasionally he did stunts. Once when an excursion party from London was watching him he went into action with his right hand tied behind his back. The dragon's head came off just as easily.

As Gawaine's record of killings mounted higher the Headmaster found it impossible to keep him completely in hand. He fell into the habit of stealing out at night and engaging in long drinking bouts at the village tavern. It was after such a debauch that he rose a little before dawn one fine August morning and started out after his fiftieth dragon. His head was heavy and his mind sluggish. He was heavy in other respects as well, for he had adopted the somewhat vulgar practice of wearing his medals, ribbons and all, when he went out dragon hunting. The decorations began on his chest and ran all the way down to his abdomen. They must have weighed at least eight pounds.

Gawaine found a dragon in the same meadow where he had killed the first one. It was a fair-sized dragon, but evidently an old one. Its face was wrinkled and Gawaine thought he had never seen so hideous a countenance. Much to the lad's disgust, the monster refused to charge and Gawaine was obliged to walk toward him. He whistled as he went. The dragon regarded him hopelessly, but craftily. Of course it had heard of Gawaine. Even when the lad raised his battle-ax the dragon made no move. It knew that there was no salvation in the quickest thrust of the head, for it had been informed that this hunter was protected by an





Drawing by Wayne Anderson

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The dragon of mythology was basically a monstrous snake. Each culture added or changed various details, but the typical dragon sported wings, scales, and a barbed tail; it was almost invariably fire-breathing. The ancient Greeks and Romans depicted dragons as beneficent powers, a tradition that continues to this day in the Far East. (The Chinese dragon, for example, is the national symbol.) In medieval Christian art, the dragon came to represent all that was evil in the world, and many heroes and saints were said to have slain dragons.

### Relating Expression Skills

The class might enjoy collaborating on designing their own version of a dragon and then creating a model of it using clay or papier-mâché.

## 23

**Point of view.** The omniscient narrator shows the old dragon's point of view as well as Gawaine's.

## 24

**Characterization.** Dragon is wily, suspicious. "False solicitude" suggests he is also sarcastic.

## 25

Dragon tries to confuse Gawaine with guilt feelings; accuses Gawaine of unsportsmanlike behavior.

## 26

Dragon decides to toy with Gawaine; Gawaine's confidence rests entirely on the magic word.

23 enchantment. It merely waited, hoping something would turn up.

Gawaine raised the battle-ax and suddenly lowered it again. He had grown very pale and he trembled violently.

24 The dragon suspected a trick. "What's the matter?" it asked, with false solicitude.

"I've forgotten the magic word," stammered Gawaine.

"What a pity," said the dragon. "So that was the secret. It doesn't seem quite sporting to me, all this magic stuff, you know. Not cricket, as we used to say when I was a little dragon; but after all, that's a matter of opinion."

Gawaine was so helpless with terror that the

dragon's confidence rose immeasurably and it could not resist the temptation to show off a bit.

"Could I possibly be of any assistance?" it asked. "What's the first letter of the magic word?"

"It begins with an 'r,'" said Gawaine weakly.

"Let's see," mused the dragon, "that doesn't tell us much, does it? What sort of a word is this? Is it an epithet,<sup>5</sup> do you think?"

Gawaine could do no more than nod.

5. **epithet** (ép'ə-thét'): a word or phrase used to describe a person, thing, or idea. An epithet is sometimes used as a substitute for a name.

27

**Anachronism.** Republican party did not exist in time of dragons and knights.

28

**Suspense.** Plan to paralyze by laughter is intriguing.

29

Gawaine's counterattack is desperate; he has no time to say magic word.

30

*After recovering from his fright, what does Gawaine wonder about?* Why he could kill the dragon without saying magic word.

31

**Characterization.** Headmaster is devious in that he has tricked Gawaine, but claims motive is pure. He wanted to save boy's life. Of course, he put boy's life in danger by sending him out to fight dragons.

32

Headmaster's discourse is designed to justify his actions.

27 "Why, of course," exclaimed the dragon, "reactionary Republican."

Gawaine shook his head.

"Well, then," said the dragon, "we'd better get down to business. Will you surrender?"

With the suggestion of a compromise Gawaine mustered up enough courage to speak.

"What will you do if I surrender?" he asked.

"Why, I'll eat you," said the dragon.

"And if I don't surrender?"

"I'll eat you just the same."

"Then it doesn't mean any difference, does it?" moaned Gawaine.

"It does to me," said the dragon with a smile. "I'd rather you didn't surrender. You'd taste much better if you didn't."

The dragon waited for a long time for Gawaine to ask "Why?" but the boy was too frightened to speak. At last the dragon had to give the explanation without his cue line. "You see," he said, "if you don't surrender you'll taste better because you'll die game."

28 This was an old and ancient trick of the dragon's. By means of some such quip he was accustomed to paralyze his victims with laughter and then to destroy them. Gawaine was sufficiently paralyzed as it was, but laughter had no part in his helplessness. With the last word of the joke the dragon drew back his head and  
29 struck. In that second there flashed into the mind of Gawaine the magic word "Rumplesnitz," but there was no time to say it. There was time only to strike and, without a word, Gawaine met the onrush of the dragon with a full swing. He put all his back and shoulders into it. The impact was terrific and the head of the dragon flew almost a hundred yards and landed in a thicket.

Gawaine did not remain frightened very long after the death of the dragon. His mood  
30 was one of wonder. He was enormously puz-

zled. He cut off the ears of the monster almost in a trance. Again and again he thought to himself, "I didn't say 'Rumplesnitz'!" He was sure of that and yet there was no question that he had killed the dragon. In fact, he had never killed one so utterly. Never before had he driven a head for anything like the same distance. Twenty-five yards was perhaps his best previous record. All the way back to the knight school he kept rumbling about in his mind seeking an explanation for what had occurred. He went to the Headmaster immediately and after closing the door told him what had happened. "I didn't say 'Rumplesnitz,'" he explained with great earnestness.

The Headmaster laughed. "I'm glad you've found out," he said. "It makes you ever so much more of a hero. Don't you see that? Now you know that it was you who killed all these dragons and not that foolish little word 'Rumplesnitz.'"

Gawaine frowned. "Then it wasn't a magic word after all?" he asked.

"Of course not," said the Headmaster, "you ought to be too old for such foolishness. There isn't any such thing as a magic word."

"But you told me it was magic," protested Gawaine. "You said it was magic and now you say it isn't."

31 "It wasn't magic in a literal sense," answered the Headmaster, "but it was much more wonderful than that. The word gave you confidence. It took away your fears. If I hadn't told you that, you might have been killed the very first time. It was your battle-ax did the trick."

Gawaine surprised the Headmaster by his attitude. He was obviously distressed by the explanation. He interrupted a long philosophic and ethical discourse by the Headmaster with  
32 "If I hadn't of hit 'em all mighty hard and fast any one of 'em might have crushed me like a, like a——" He fumbled for a word.

"Eggshell," suggested the Headmaster.

"Like a eggshell," assented Gawaine, and he said it many times. All through the evening meal people who sat near him heard him muttering, "Like a eggshell, like a eggshell."

33 The next day was clear, but Gawaine did not get up at dawn. Indeed, it was almost noon when the Headmaster found him cowering in bed, with the clothes pulled over his head. The principal called the Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce, and together they dragged the boy toward the forest.

"He'll be all right as soon as he gets a couple more dragons under his belt," explained the Headmaster.

The Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce agreed. "It would be a shame to stop such a fine run," he said. "Why, counting that one yesterday, he's killed fifty dragons."

They pushed the boy into a thicket above which hung a meager cloud of steam. It was 34 obviously quite a small dragon. But Gawaine did not come back that night or the next. In fact, he never came back. Some weeks afterward brave spirits from the school explored the thicket, but they could find nothing to remind them of Gawaine except the metal parts of his medals. Even the ribbons had been de-voised.

The Headmaster and the Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce agreed that it would be just as well not to tell the school how Gawaine had achieved his record and still less how he came to die. They held that it might have a bad effect on school spirit. Accordingly, Gawaine has lived in the memory of the school as its greatest hero. No visitor succeeds in leaving the building today without seeing a great shield which hangs on the wall of the dining hall. Fifty pairs of dragon's ears are mounted upon the shield and underneath in gilt letters is "Gawaine le Cœur-Hardy," followed by the simple inscription, "He killed fifty dragons." The record has never been equaled.

## Reading Check

1. Why did Gawaine receive special training as a dragon-slayer?
2. What did the Headmaster give Gawaine to protect him from dragons?
3. Why did Gawaine have trouble when he went to kill his fiftieth dragon?
4. What caused Gawaine to lose his confidence?
5. How was Gawaine honored by his school?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Story

1. A traditional tale about knights and dragons would not include, as one of its characters, an "Assistant Professor of Pleasaunce." Nor would the character ask "Would any refund on the tuition fee be necessary in case of an accident?" Such **anachronisms**—that is, events existing out of their proper time in history—add to the humor of the story. Cite other details in which the "knight school" is treated as if it were a school of today.

2a. Explain the Headmaster's plan to turn Gawaine into a bold knight. b. What attitude toward human nature is behind this plan? c. Would you call it a cynical attitude? Explain.

3a. Gawaine has several assets as a dragon-slaying knight: "enormous strength as well as speed and grace." But he also has a serious flaw. What is it? b. What other flaws in his character emerge after he becomes a famous dragon slayer?

4. The encounter with the fiftieth dragon, a key episode in the story, is both humorous and suspenseful. a. Point out humorous

33

*What has happened to Gawaine's spirit?* Having learned about hoax, he has lost spirit completely.

34

**Resolution.** Gawaine's belief in magic is so strong that he perishes without it. Headmaster and Professor disguise what has happened.

### READING CHECK

1. To build his spirit (p. 199).
2. A magic word (p. 201).
3. Forgot magic word (p. 203).
4. Learned word was not really magic (p. 204).
5. Mounted shield in dining room, displaying dragon's ears and inscription (p. 205).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Headmaster offers Gawaine cigarette; Gawaine lights up expertly. Gawaine has received "preliminary degree." Curate files "a report."

2a. Gives courses in theory and practice and equips him with magic word. 2b. Headmaster thinks Gawaine capable but lacking confidence. Tricks Gawaine to make him act boldly. 2c. Cynical in thinking that a lad may have to be sacrificed for "the greater good" or to improve his character.

3a. He lacks confidence. 3b. Becomes a showoff, sneaks off to drink.

4a. Entire episode on pp. 202-204. Students might cite passages starting "It doesn't seem quite . . ."; " . . . if you don't surrender . . ."; and "reactionary Republican."



## CLOSURE

Ask students to tell whether the **theme** of "The Fifty-First Dragon" is relevant to any time period and explain how the same theme might be used in a story about a modern teenager.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

You may wish to have students read one or more of James Thurber's satirical fables, collected in *Fables for Our Time* and *Further Fables for Our Time*, which are closer in spirit to "The Fifty-First Dragon" than are Aesop's fables. Each of Thur-

4b. Gawaine trying to remember magic word, details of paragraph that relate how dragon plans to kill Gawaine.

5a. Realizes that any of dragons could have crushed him "like an eggshell." He cowers in bed and must be dragged out to forest. He never returns. 5b. Answers will vary.

6. Wording will vary. People need spirit and trust in something or someone before they can accomplish a difficult and dangerous task. In Gawaine's case, he lacks spirit at the beginning of the story, gains it from his belief in the power of the magic word, and then loses it again when he realizes the magic word is a hoax.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

Synonyms: 1. b. restless 2. a. float 3. d. cringe 4. c. concern

Antonyms: 5. a. picky 6. a. plentiful 7. d. end 8. a. cautious

Grammatical Relationship: 9. a. fierce 10. c. judicial

Action and Object Relationship: 11. b. troops 12. d. sword

Degree Relationship: 13. a. forest

Cause-and-Effect Relationship: 14. c. suffering

passages. b. What details contribute to the suspense?

5. When Gawaine tells the Headmaster about his encounter with the fiftieth dragon, the Headmaster reveals that there is no such thing as a magic word. a. What effect does this revelation have on Gawaine? b. If you were in Gawaine's place, would you have wanted to be told the truth about the magic word? Why or why not?

6. "The Fifty-First Dragon" can be understood on two levels. On the most obvious level, it is an amusing spoof of tales about knights and dragons. On a deeper level, it makes a serious comment about human beings and their need for beliefs. State the theme, using evidence from the story to support your answer.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Analogies

You are familiar with vocabulary questions that ask you to identify synonyms or antonyms. These questions usually involve a pair of words. Some other vocabulary questions, called **analogies**, involve two pairs of words. You must first decide what relationship exists between the words in the first pair. The same relationship applies to the second pair.

An analogy question has a special format and uses special symbols. Let's look at one type of analogy question:

intelligent : smart :: cold : \_\_\_\_\_

a. high b. quick c. chilly d. bright

The two dots (:) stand for "is to"; the four dots (::) stand for "as." The example, therefore, reads "Intelligent *is to* smart *as* cold *is to* \_\_\_\_\_." Since the first two words, *intelligent* and *smart*, are synonyms, the correct answer is **c**. The word that means the same thing as *cold* is *chilly*.

In addition to questions involving synonym and antonym relationships, analogy questions may test understanding of grammatical or verbal relationships, cause and effect relationships, sequential relationships, and the like.

Complete the following analogies:

### Synonyms

1. wealthy : rich :: restive : \_\_\_\_\_

a. classic c. natural  
b. restless d. responsible

2. think : consider :: hover : \_\_\_\_\_

a. float c. cause  
b. sell d. handle

3. stop : halt :: cower : \_\_\_\_\_

a. command c. criticize  
b. complain d. cringe

4. battle : fight :: solicitude : \_\_\_\_\_

a. silence c. concern  
b. difference d. cause

### Antonyms

5. versatile : rigid :: indiscriminate : \_\_\_\_\_

a. picky c. rival  
b. ideal d. hilarious

6. preliminary : concluding :: meager : \_\_\_\_\_

a. plentiful c. timid  
b. honest d. responsible

7. give : take :: protract : \_\_\_\_\_

a. claim c. promise  
b. own d. end

8. winning : losing :: impetuous : \_\_\_\_\_

a. cautious c. secretive  
b. embarrassing d. unemployed

### Grammatical Relationship

9. heroism : heroic :: ferocity : \_\_\_\_\_

a. fierce c. fortunate  
b. friendly d. thankful

10. ethics : ethical :: justice : \_\_\_\_\_

a. joyous c. judicial  
b. emphatic d. judge

ber's fables ends with a humorous moral; for example, "The Unicorn in the Garden" ends with "Don't count your boobies until they are hatched." Ask students to invent a humorous moral for "The Fifty-First Dragon."

Students might enjoy writing their own hu-

morous short stories involving dragons and knights. This could be an overnight assignment, with volunteers reading their stories in class the next day.

The 1981 movie *Dragonslayer*, available on videocassette, could be shown in class over a few

days or one afternoon after school. Have students compare the tones of the short story and movie and the dragon in each.

### Action and Object Relationship

11. answer : question :: muster : \_\_\_\_\_

- a. prayer
- b. troops
- c. camera
- d. skill

12. drive : automobile :: brandish : \_\_\_\_\_

- a. airplane
- b. commercial
- c. adventure
- d. sword

### Degree Relationship

13. puddle : pond :: thicket : \_\_\_\_\_

- a. forest
- b. thorn
- c. fabric
- d. ticket

### Cause and Effect Relationship

14. investigation : proof :: malice : \_\_\_\_\_

- a. value
- b. fortune
- c. suffering
- d. freedom

## Writing About Literature

### Explaining Levels of Meaning

Broun's story can be read as an amusing spoof or as a serious commentary on our need for beliefs. In an essay explain the different levels of meaning in the story. In the first part of your essay, give a summary of the plot, including the major events and their consequences. Then, with reference to these events, explain the underlying theme in the story.

## Creative Writing

### Recasting the Story

Write a modern equivalent of "The Fifty-First Dragon." Instead of making Gawaine a knight, choose some profession or trade he might follow today. Instead of an encounter with the fifty-first dragon, choose a comparable encounter as the key episode of your story. Here are some possibilities: Gawaine as an offensive football player—given false confidence by his coach's pep talks and finally encountering a

330-pound tackle; Gawaine as a supersalesman discovering that the product he sells is defective. In developing these or other possibilities, emphasize the character's need to believe and his collapse when the belief proves false.

## About the Author

Heywood Broun (1888–1939)



Born in Brooklyn, New York, Heywood Broun attended the Horace Mann School in Manhattan, where he edited the school newspaper. After attending Harvard, he got a job with the New

York *Telegraph* as a sports writer. In 1912 he went to work for the New York *Tribune*, where he began his column, "It Seems to Me." In time, it became one of the most popular newspaper columns in America. Although Broun published several novels, he was best known as a newspaper columnist. He had strong, controversial opinions and did not hesitate to express them. One critic has written that Broun's work at its best shows "a depth, a warmth, and a power . . . that were the outward expression of the man himself."

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Students should focus their essays on the multilevel meanings of "dragon," "knights," and "magic words" as well as on the actual events of the story. If time permits, have students form small editing groups to polish their rough drafts. Students may read their drafts aloud and then collect the groups' suggestions and criticisms before starting their revisions.

## CREATIVE WRITING

As students plan modern equivalents of Heywood Broun's story, they should recognize that his plot formula is used repeatedly in television comedies and popular fiction. They can be original in their creation of circumstances and characters, however. In addition to the situations suggested on p. 207, here are three possibilities.

Gabriella, a girl something like Gawaine, believes in her magic charm locket so much that she can act on stage superbly as long as she is wearing it. What happens when it falls off during a performance?

Minerva has been told that she "can't miss" the turnoff to her friend Isabel's country home, but it's long after dark and she is still looking.

Zenobia has been told by everyone that she has fine musical talent—until she forgets how to play in the middle of her piano recital.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Heywood Broun, one of the most popular journalists of his day, was turned down three times for a position on his college newspaper. Later his column "It Seems to Me" was estimated to boost circulation of a newspaper by as many as 50,000 readers.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze and evaluate specific elements of the short story as represented in selected stories in the unit.

## PRESENTATION

You might begin by defining *criteria* (standard rules or tests to follow) and *evaluating* (judging) and then listing the standard elements of a short story: **plot, character, setting, point of view, irony, symbol, and theme.** You might also

refer students back to the activity on close reading at the beginning of the unit and to the guidelines offered for reading a short story if review is needed. At this point, students should be ready to begin working through the Developing Skills in Critical Thinking exercise.

## ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

1. Coincidental happenings can make a story seem improbable.
2. Poe expresses the major conflict of the story when Montresor vows revenge. The story builds in suspense as the men make their way through the catacombs.
3. Characters in fiction may include persons, animals, things, or natural forces.
4. The main characters in "The Pacing Goose" are not described, but they are brought to life through their actions, their thoughts, and their words.
5. The entire story of "The Most Dangerous Game" is dependent on the exotic jungle-island setting. In "War," the setting is also essential, although we cannot definitely pinpoint the time period other than wartimes.
6. In "The Necklace," the omniscient point of view controls the reader's reaction to Mme. Loisel. It provides knowledge about her dreams of being wealthy and enhances understanding of how she must have felt when poverty-stricken.
7. Jim and Della give up their most precious possessions to give each other a gift. The gloves in "A Mother in Mannville" might be interpreted as a symbol of Jerry's ultimate gift to his imagined mother.
8. The theme of "The Scarlet Ibis" might be stated as "pride is a wonderful, terrible thing" (p. 158).

# DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

## Establishing Criteria for Evaluation

You have seen that your enjoyment and understanding of short stories can be heightened by a close study of the interplay of various elements. Before concluding your study of this genre, you may wish to consider the criteria to be used in reading and *evaluating*, or judging, the merits of other short stories.

### Plot

1. *Is the main conflict of the story handled well?* Do the episodes of the story grow logically out of the conflict? Is the resolution of the conflict acceptable or is it improbable?
2. *Are the elements of suspense and foreshadowing handled skillfully?* Is your interest sustained?

How does "The Cask of Amontillado" show skillful use of all these plot elements? In your opinion, which story in this unit has the best-developed plot?

### Character

3. *Are the characters believable and consistent in their behavior?* Are their actions well motivated? Are you adequately prepared for any change in a character's actions or thoughts?
4. *Are the characters presented effectively?* Are characters revealed through their thoughts, actions, and words or merely through direct comment? Are characters clearly individualized?

How do these criteria apply to the characters in "The Pacing Goose"? Which characters in the stories you have read are the most completely realized?

### Setting

5. *What role does setting play?* Does it have an important connection to the plot or is it unrelated? Does the setting help to create atmosphere or to depict character?

Consider the role of setting in "The Most Dangerous Game" and "War."

### Point of View

6. *What point of view is used and what is its purpose?* What does the author gain by using either a limited or omniscient point of view? How does the author use point of view to control your reactions to characters and events?

How does the narrator in "The Necklace" control your reaction to Mme. Loisel?

### Irony and Symbol

7. *What is the significance of ironic and symbolic elements?* What kinds of irony are used, and how does irony affect the tone of the story? Do the symbols add meaning to the story?

Consider the use of irony in "The Gift of the Magi." What meanings might be attributed to the symbol of the gloves in "A Mother in Mannville"?

### Theme

8. *Does the story offer some insight into human experience?* Does the story have a theme or does it exist chiefly for entertainment? Do all the other elements contribute to the theme of the story?

What is the theme of "The Scarlet Ibis"? Test your statement by seeing if it includes all important aspects of the story.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to use the steps in the writing process to put ideas together effectively.

## PRESENTATION

Through completion of **Close Reading** and **Developing Skills in Critical Thinking** activities, students have learned to understand not only what the writer has said but also how the writer has put ideas together most effectively. This

Practice in Reading and Writing section guides students in putting that knowledge to work by applying what they have learned to their own writing. Students are advised to consider writing as a process, consisting of several key stages or phases. These stages are prewriting,

# PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

## The Writing Process

Writing is often referred to as a *process*, which consists of several key stages or phases: *prewriting*, *writing a first draft*, *evaluating*, *revising*, *proofreading*, and *writing the final version*. In this process, much of the crucial work precedes the actual writing of the paper. In the prewriting stage, the writer makes decisions about what to say and how to say it. Prewriting activities include choosing and limiting a topic, identifying purpose and audience, gathering ideas, organizing ideas, and arriving at the controlling idea for the paper. In the writing stage, the writer uses the working plan to write a first draft of the paper. The writer evaluates this draft and considers how content, organization, and style might be improved. In the revising stage, the writer revises the draft, adding or deleting ideas, rearranging sentences, rephrasing for clarity. After proofreading for errors, in spelling, punctuation, and grammar, the writer produces a clean copy and proofreads it. The steps in this process are interdependent. New ideas may emerge as the paper is written, or it may become necessary to add evidence.

## Descriptive Writing

The purpose of a descriptive passage is to give a clear picture or impression of a scene, character, or object. A good description contains specific details, all of which support a dominant impression. Sometimes a writer will state in the very first sentence the main impression he or she wishes to convey, as in this paragraph from "The Pacing Goose."

Spring's a various season, Jess thought, no two years the same: comes in with rains, mud deep enough to swallow horse and rider; comes in cold, snow falling so fast it weaves a web; comes in with a warm wind blowing about thy ears and bringing a smell of something flowering, not here, but southaways, across the Ohio, maybe, in Kentucky. Nothing here now but a smell of melting snow—which is no smell at all, but a kind of prickle in the nose, like a bygone sneeze. Comes in so various, winter put by and always so welcome.

1. What impression does this paragraph give you?
2. What phrase in the last sentence reinforces the paragraph's dominant impression?
3. What details does Jessamyn West use to support the dominant impression? Which of these details give visual pictures? Which appeal to the other senses?

In reading a description, you should try to grasp the dominant impression given by the details the writer has chosen. Read the following paragraph from "All the Years of Her Life." Write a statement of the dominant impression you receive and list the details supporting this impression.

Mrs. Higgins must have been going to bed when he telephoned, for her hair was tucked in loosely under her hat, and her hand at her throat held her light coat tightly across her chest so her dress would not

## THE WRITING PROCESS

Although we refer to the "stages" or "phases" of the writing process, the stages are usually not distinctly separate steps. For example, writers often do prewriting activities after they have actually started composing the first draft. The process of evaluating and revising may be repeated several times before the final draft is actually written.

## DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

This section instructs students in descriptive writing, emphasizing an author's use of sensory details to give the reader a clear picture or impression of a scene, character, or object.

## Answers

1. Like Jess, we see the various ways that spring comes in.
2. "Comes in so various . . ."
3. Details like "mud deep enough to swallow horse and rider" and "snow falling so fast it weaves a web" give visual pictures and also tactile sensations. Details like "a warm wind blowing about thy ears and bringing a smell of something flowering" and "a smell of melting snow" appeal to senses of touch, smell, and sight.

## Answers

1. Mrs. Higgins acts with confidence and self-assurance in difficult situations. Other details show her composure and warmth, and several details indicate her haste.

writing a first draft, evaluating, revising, proofreading, and writing the final version. You might take a few minutes at this point to review the specific activities that you would expect your students to complete at each stage. You might also request that volunteers describe any experiences

they have already had in using the writing process. For example, what prewriting activities do they routinely use? How do they know when a paper is good enough to hand in? What steps do they take to ensure that their papers are error-free?

#### **SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING**

If students lack ideas for descriptions, you might suggest such places as the school parking lot just before the late bell, an apple orchard at a certain season, a neglected vacant lot, the sanctuary of a church or synagogue on a holy day, a gym on a Saturday afternoon, an empty bowling alley, or a playground full of preschoolers. As students follow the textbook directions for writing, you might go from desk to desk reading and commenting helpfully. After students have completed the assignment, ask several students to read their descriptions aloud so that classmates may compliment well-organized paragraphs that have pertinent details and exact words. Let students revise their descriptions to improve arrangement and wording, thus strengthening the dominant impression.

#### **NARRATIVE WRITING**

In this section, students are advised that to make narrative clear, a writer must arrange the events in some kind of logical order—usually chronological order, the order in which the events occur in time.

show. She came in, large and plump, with a little smile on her friendly face. Most of the store lights had been turned out and at first she did not see Alfred, who was standing in the shadow at the end of the counter. Yet as soon as she saw him she did not look as Alfred thought she would look: she smiled, her blue eyes never wavered, and with a calmness and dignity that made them forget that her clothes seemed to have been thrown on her, she put out her hand to Mr. Carr and said politely, "I'm Mrs. Higgins. I'm Alfred's mother."

### **Suggestions for Writing**

Write a paragraph describing some place you have recently seen. State your dominant impression of the place in your first sentence, and then support it with details arranged in a logical order such as left to right, up to down, or near to far.

In a single paragraph, communicate your impression of a person or thing. Suggest this impression with the details you select and the order in which you arrange them.

#### **Prewriting**

- Look hard at the scene, character, or object you are describing to get a definite impression of what you want your reader to feel or see. Or, using your imagination, jot down details that will create a vivid picture for the reader. Concentrate on details that appeal to the senses.
- Arrange the details in some logical sequence, chronological, spatial, or some other order.
- Compose a topic sentence that states or suggests the main impression. For instance, is the mood of the scene one of gaiety, excitement, high spirits?

#### **Evaluating and Revising**

- Does your opening sentence convey a main impression of the scene?
- Does every sentence support the main impression?
- Have you included enough details to develop your main impression adequately?
- Are the details arranged in logical order?
- Are there transitions connecting the ideas in your paper?
- Have you used precise words and images?

#### **Proofreading**

- Reread your revised version and correct mistakes in grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Ask a classmate to check your revision for accuracy, and then prepare a final copy.

### **Narrative Writing**

Narration is storytelling, and a paragraph of narration, like a story, is a series of events or actions. In a good paragraph, as in a good story, the order of incidents is clear and logical: one action leads to another in a way that seems right and natural. The most natural order for such a series of events is *chronological*—that is, in the same order as they would naturally occur in time.

A good story begins—and a good paragraph may begin—in a way that arouses your curiosity and anticipation. Once your interest is aroused, you are more alert to all the details of the actions and readier to draw your own conclusions. Reading narration demands a special alertness and readiness to draw conclusions. The author very often simply tells what happened, leaving it up to you to form your own opinion of the character or characters involved and what their actions show about them.

This paragraph from "The Most Dangerous Game" captures the tension of the hunt. Note

how the very first sentence arouses your anticipation. Note how carefully the sequence of events is conveyed.

They would be on him any minute now. His mind worked frantically. He thought of a native trick he had learned in Uganda. He slid down the tree. He caught hold of a springy young sapling and to it he fastened his hunting knife, with the blade pointing down the trail; with a bit of wild grapevine he tied back the sapling. Then he ran for his life. The hounds raised their voices as they hit the fresh scent. Rainsford knew now how an animal at bay feels.

In reading narration, try to follow the sequence of events that lead to the climax of each episode. Read the following paragraph from “War” and outline the events in sequence:

The shots died down as the magazines were emptied, until, quickly, there was no more shooting. The young man was elated. Through that astonishing fusillade he had come unscathed. He glanced back. Yes, they had emptied their magazines. He could see several reloading. Others were running back behind the house for their horses. As he looked, two, already mounted, came back into view around the corner, riding hard. And at the same moment, he saw the man with the unmistakable ginger beard kneel down on the ground, level his gun, and coolly take his time for the long shot.

## Suggestions for Writing

Plan and write an account of some event or incident you saw or were involved in. Make sure your sequence of events leads logically to the climax of the episode.

Write a short story based on an exciting inci-

dent you saw or read or heard about. Work out a logical sequence of events and actions. Include dialogue if you wish.

### Prewriting

- Decide on the characters and setting for the events. Decide on what you want the climax of the story to be.
- Ask and answer the questions *Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How?*
- Organize details in chronological order.
- Use vivid verbs.
- Choose an opening sentence that will catch the reader's interest.

### Evaluating, Revising, and Proofreading

- Is the opening sentence lively and interesting?
- Is the sequence of events clear?
- Have you included the most significant details? Have you deleted repetitive or irrelevant items?
- Are there appropriate transitional words (*then, next, at a later time*) to connect your ideas and to help the narrative flow smoothly?
- Have you used precise verbs and specific modifiers?

## Writing Dialogue

In addition to descriptive details, stories usually use *dialogue*—the direct quotation of the characters' speech. Dialogue serves many purposes: it moves the story forward, it interprets character, and it breaks up long passages of solid prose. Dialogue also helps us *hear* the story, as if it is actually taking place in front of us. Here is a passage of dialogue from “The Fifty-First Dragon.” The speakers are Gawaine and the Headmaster. Gawaine speaks first:

“I’d like an enchanted cap,” said Gawaine.

### Answers

1. One possible answer is as follows:

- I. The shooting dies down.
- II. The young man is elated because he has come through unscathed.
- III. Soldiers renew their pursuit.
- IV. The man with the ginger beard kneels and levels his gun.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING

Before students begin the writing exercise, you may want to have them review the guidelines in **The Writing Process** on p. 209 and study the guidelines listed in this section.

Some students with an eye for detail and a flair for drama can make a funny or exciting story from a trivial incident—losing a shoe heel or finding a four-leaf clover. Other students may need to choose an important event—a serious quarrel with a friend, a traffic accident, competition for an award, or meeting a celebrity. After students have chosen their topics, help them plan their true-to-life narratives, following the guidelines in the text.

### WRITING DIALOGUE

In this section, students are provided with instruction in writing dialogue, the direct quotations of the characters' speech. A passage of dialogue from “The Fifty-First Dragon” is provided as a model.

After reviewing the questions at the end of the passage and having students complete the exercises listed in question 3, you may want to discuss the importance of using every available clue when reading dialogue. Point out to students that writers often combine dialogue with descriptive details to provide this information to the reader.



## Answers

1. Gawaine's request for an enchanted cap tells us he is probably looking for a way to escape reality. The Headmaster speaking "testily" and "laughing indulgently" tells us he is probably feeling impatient and does not take Gawaine's request seriously.

2. Students may visualize Gawaine with an anxious expression, perhaps avoiding direct eye contact. The headmaster may be visualized as looking cynical. He may even have a sneer on his face as he delivers his last few lines.

3. Students' paraphrases and answers will vary. Most should agree that the dramatic effect has been lessened.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING

In this section, students are asked to invent dialogue for a short story they have studied. This activity might be extended by having students create a short story to be planned, written, and revised over a period of several weeks. The story-writing process may include the following: a plot outline, character sketches, description of setting, dialogue, narrative passages (*showing* action, not summarizing it), a first draft of the story, and revisions.

"What's that?" asked the Headmaster, testily.

"A cap to make me disappear," explained Gawaine.

The Headmaster laughed indulgently. "You mustn't believe all those old wives' stories," he said. "There isn't any such thing. A cap to make you disappear, indeed! What would you do with it? You haven't even appeared yet. Why, my boy, you could walk from here to London, and nobody would so much as look at you. You're nobody. You couldn't be more invisible than that."

1. What clues in this passage tell how the characters feel?
2. What *actions* are part of the dialogue—that is, what do you visualize these characters doing? What expressions are on their faces as they speak?
3. Rewrite this scene as a straight narrative, omitting all dialogue. Do you think a dramatic effect has been lost? Give reasons for your answer.

## Suggestions for Writing

Invent some dialogue for the characters in a story you have read. Consider, for example, the scene between Mme. Loisel and her husband after she returns home with the news that the necklace was paste. Make sure that your dialogue is appropriate for each speaker and that you use the correct style for quotations.

## For Further Reading

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Bradbury, Ray, *Long After Midnight* (Knopf, 1976; paperback, Bantam)

A master of science fiction presents twenty-two of his eerie tales.

Chavez, Fray Angelico, *The Short Stories of Fray Angelico Chavez*, ed. Genaro M. Padilla (University of New Mexico Press, 1987)

Here are fourteen stories that deal with life in New Mexico from colonial times to the present.

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan, *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (Doubleday, 1987)

Among the fifty-six short stories are "The Red-Headed League," "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," and "The Boscombe Valley Mystery."

Henry, O., *Best Short Stories of O. Henry* (Doubleday, 1965)

Here is a varied collection of stories by the master of surprise endings.

Hoke, Helen, ed. *Demonic, Dangerous, and Deadly* (E. P. Dutton, 1983)

Here are nine stories, including works by Roald Dahl, Ambrose Bierce, and John Collier.

Hughes, Langston, *Something in Common and Other Stories* (paperback, Hill & Wang, 1963)

These thirty-seven stories, which were chosen for this book by Hughes, range in setting from Africa to Harlem and reveal a rare sense of humanity.

Irving, Washington, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Other Selections from Washington Irving*, ed. Austin M. Fox (paperback, Pocket Books, 1962)

This book includes selections from *The Sketch Book*, *The Alhambra*, *Tales of a Traveler*, and other works that have become part of America's folklore.

Muller, Marcia, and Bill Pronzini, eds., *She Won the West: An Anthology of Western and Frontier Stories by Women* (William Morrow, 1985)

This collection contains fourteen stories by women. Included are selections by Willa Cather, Mary Austin, Mari Sandoz, and Dorothy M. Johnson.

Poe, Edgar Allan, *Great Tales of Horror by Edgar Allan Poe*, ed. David A. Sohn (paperback, Bantam, 1964)

Readers will enjoy "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Masque of the Red Death," and ten other chilling tales of suspense by the master of the supernatural.

Pronzini, Bill, and Martin H. Greenberg, eds., *The Western Hall of Fame: An Anthology of Classic Western Stories* (William Morrow, 1984)

This volume includes seventeen classic and contemporary stories selected by the Western Writers of America.

Thurber, James, *My World—and Welcome to It* (paperback, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969, 1983)

In this mixture of thirty stories, sketches, and articles, the famous humorist includes such stories as "The Whip-Poor-Will" and "You Could Look It Up."

Twain, Mark, *The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain*, ed. Charles Neider (Doubleday, 1957; paperback, Bantam)

Sixty stories cover the span of the great satirist's life and reflect the humor of the American frontier.

### FOR FURTHER READING

You may want to compile a reading list from which students choose selections for book reports. The list might include selections from the great masters of fiction. An alternative approach would be to have students contribute ideas for the list. Each student could give reasons why his or her choice should be included. Supporting reasons could include biographical information about the author, information about the work itself, and (if the student has read the work) a personal recommendation of the work.

# TEACHING GUIDE

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## NONFICTION

### OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

The nonfiction unit, rich in literary quality and interest, contains two major sections: *Essays*, with four selections, and *Biography and Personal Recollection*, with six selections. Together, the selections present students with a solid introduction to the wide range of topics available to readers of nonfiction.

In the first essay of the unit, "Growing Up Game," Brenda Peterson offers personal recollections of growing up as she explains her feelings about eating the meat of wild animals. In "How to Name a Dog," James Thurber reminisces delightfully about the naming of dogs. Edwin Way Teale describes the life and death of a noble oak in "The Death of a Tree." The essay section concludes with "The Flight of Rachel Carson," in which Geoffrey Norman tells how Carson's writing created worldwide concern for the environment.

Five of the six selections in the second section are autobiographical. Dorothy West, in "My Mother, Rachel West," reflects on remembrances of and feelings toward her mother. Charles Dickens confides his poignant story of child labor in a blacking factory in "Fragments of an Autobiography." Harry Mark Petrakis tells in "A Whole Nation and a People" of how an elderly grocer taught him to appreciate his Greek heritage. In the excerpt from *Life on the Mississippi*, Mark Twain recalls his river-pilot days and describes how he learned to "read" the Mississippi. Barry Lopez' impressions of the arctic landscape and the wildlife found there are revealed in an excerpt from his *Arctic Dreams*. The one biographical sketch in the unit is written by John McPhee. In this excerpt from *A Sense of Where You Are*, McPhee profiles an extraordinary basketball star—Bill Bradley.

Following the selections are exercises and activities that facilitate the development of students' reading, vocabulary, and writing skills. The reading skills exercises provide students with practice developing topic sentences, recognizing figures of speech, and analyzing tone. The vocabulary activities help students determine meanings of words and phrases through context clues, identify parallelism, explore Latin origins of words, recognize jargon, and distinguish denotative from connotative meanings. The composition assignments in the unit offer students the opportunity to write in the various forms of discourse: persuasion, description, exposition, and narration. In addition, exercises on outlining and comparison/contrast organization are included. **Practice in Reading and Writing** concludes the unit with an emphasis on the use of facts and statistics in expository writing.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

The aims of this unit are for the student:

- To use literary terminology appropriately in discussion and analysis of nonfiction selections

- To demonstrate an effective use of language in explaining and interpreting nonfiction selections
- To identify main ideas, feelings, influences, impressions, and new perceptions expressed in nonfiction selections
- To demonstrate an understanding of the details revealed about the writers in their nonfiction writings—personalities, attitudes, impressions, and points of view
- To analyze and interpret elements of nonfiction selections
- To list examples of sports jargon and special terms associated with a subject of interest
- To compare and contrast nonfiction essays in *Adventures in Reading*
- To write expository, descriptive, and narrative compositions on a variety of topics
- To demonstrate an understanding of context clues and the use of a dictionary to determine exact meanings of words

### CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The following concepts and skills are treated in this unit:

#### Close Reading of an Essay

Thinking Model 218

Analysis 219

Guidelines for Reading an Essay 220

#### Literary Elements and Reading Skills

Essay: Formal and Informal 216

Style 216

Informal Essay 231

Opening Sentences 232

Thesis 238

Figures of Speech 238

Biography 249

Personal Recollection 249

Analogy 282

Tone 286

Diction 286

Connotation and Denotation 286

#### Language and Vocabulary Skills

Using Context Clues 225

Recognizing Words Used for Humorous Effect 232

Determining Exact Meanings 232

Determining Exact Meanings 238

Recognizing Parallelism 238



SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
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Close Reading of an Essay 217			
"Growing Up Game" Brenda Peterson 221		Using Context Clues 225	Holding an Interview 226
"How to Name a Dog" James Thurber 227	Opening Sentences 232	Recognizing Words Used for Humorous Effect 232 Determining Exact Meanings 232	Writing a Humorous Essay 233
"The Death of a Tree" Edwin Way Teale 234	Figures of Speech 238 Thesis 238	Determining Exact Meanings 238 Recognizing Parallelism 238	Describing a Process 239 Writing an Outline of "The Death of a Tree" 239
"The Flight of Rachel Carson" Geoffrey Norman 240		Learning Words from 'the Latin 248	Evaluating a Persuasive Essay 248
<i>Biography and Personal Recollection</i>			
"My Mother, Rachel West" Dorothy West 249		Distinguishing Meanings 251	Developing a Topic by Examples 251
from <i>A Sense of Where You Are</i> John McPhee 252		Recognizing Jargon 262	Explaining the Rules of a Game 263
"Fragments of an Autobiography" Charles Dickens 264		Explaining Phrases from Context 271 Rewriting a Passage in Modern English 271	Describing a Work Experience 272
"A Whole Nation and a People" Harry Mark Petrakis 273		Examining Phrases from Context 278	Writing About a Personal Experience 278
from <i>Life on the Mississippi</i> Mark Twain 279	Analogy 282		Comparing Two Passages from <i>Life on the Mississippi</i> 282
from <i>Arctic Dreams</i> Barry Lopez 284	Tone 286 Diction 286 Denotation and Connotation 286	Distinguishing Denotative from Connotative Meanings 286	Comparing and Contrasting Attitudes 287
<i>Developing Skills in Critical Thinking</i> 288	Understanding Cause-and-Effect Relationships 288		
<i>Practice in Reading and Writing</i> 289			Expository Writing 289 Suggestions for Writing 289 Writing a Paragraph Using Facts and Statistics 290

Learning Words from the Latin	248
Distinguishing Meanings	251
Recognizing Jargon	262
Explaining Phrases from Context	271
Rewriting a Passage in Modern English	271
Examining Phrases from Context	278
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## Writing About Literature

Evaluating a Persuasive Essay	248
Comparing Two Passages from <i>Life on the Mississippi</i>	282
Comparing and Contrasting Attitudes	287

## Other Types of Writing

Writing a Humorous Essay	233
Describing a Process	239
Writing an Outline of "The Death of a Tree"	239
Developing a Topic by Examples	251
Explaining the Rules of a Game	263
Describing a Work Experience	272
Writing about a Personal Experience	278

## Extending Your Study

Investigating Attitudes	272
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## For Oral Expression

Holding an Interview	226
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## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Understanding Cause-and-Effect Relationships	288
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## Practice in Reading and Writing

Expository Writing	289
Writing a Paragraph Using Facts and Statistics	290

## INTRODUCING THE UNIT

You may want to include one or more of the following projects in your plans for introducing the nonfiction unit:

1. Obtain enough copies of one edition of a local newspaper for all students in your class. Most newspaper editors are willing to provide copies free or at minimal cost. (They may be willing to talk to your students or to guide a tour through the newspaper offices.) Help students analyze the purpose, form, content, and style of news stories, editorials, syndicated columns, advertisements, and special sections, such as sports, business, entertainment, and books. If time permits, guide students in the writing and layout of their own class newspapers.
2. You may ask students to keep a diary or a personal journal as they read the nonfiction unit. Besides recording their own experiences, they might respond to each of the nonfiction selections by writing a *précis* or their personal comments.
3. Ask students to keep a log of their television viewing, distinguishing between fictional and nonfictional programs. Assist students in composing and applying criteria for judging programs. Students might recommend various programs as entertaining, interesting, accurate, informative, thought-provoking,

or inspiring. Conversely, they might cite certain programs as dull, stereotyped, exaggerated, inane, or dreary. In every case, they should provide evidence to support their judgment.

4. As you introduce the individual selections in the unit, you may want to include some of the following activities. To introduce "Growing Up Game," start a class discussion on food experiences. Topics might include most unusual foods eaten, a funny "first" experience (such as "the first time I ate beef tongue, rabbit, etc."), a cooking disaster, or disguised foods, such as meatless hot dogs. Students might interview others about these experiences and write a humorous essay on the results.

Before students read "How to Name a Dog," ask them to list the names of all the pets they have had and the reasons those names were chosen. They could accompany the list with sketches or cartoons of their animals. To finalize the activities, they might write a personal recollection of what a particular animal meant to them. Some students could share their stories with the class.

Before students read "The Death of a Tree" and "The Flight of Rachel Carson," bring in articles on controversial environmental issues, such as the tree spiking in the Pacific Northwest and the massive land clearing in the Amazon rain forest. Set up a debate after students have read the articles. You may also want to include articles on chemicals, from home pesticides to chemical spills. Have students use the dictionary to look up unfamiliar words and make an "environmentally positive" poster.

As an introduction to the Biography and Personal Recollections section, ask students to clip articles about public figures, American or foreign, and to write an episode for their biographies. To prepare students for *A Sense of Where You Are*, ask them to imagine that they have just won an important prize or honor in their favorite sport. They might write essays or prepare radio/TV script "interviews" about their lifelong involvement with that sport: how they began, how much time they practice daily, challenges along the way.

A project to research child labor in other countries could be an effective introduction to "Fragments of an Autobiography." Students might give results in an oral report.

Before they read "A Whole Nation and a People," ask students if they have a family favorite meal or dish for special occasions. Make a chart of such dishes and ask students to determine the ethnic backgrounds of the foods. Discuss ingredients for the dishes and ethnic groceries or sections of grocery stores in your vicinity. You might ask students to write an expository paragraph on how to prepare an unusual dish.

As you introduce "Life on the Mississippi," ask students to imagine being a passenger on the riverboat piloted by Twain. They might describe the boat, the scenery, and their thoughts as they travel. They might also put themselves in the place of the pilot, either as an experienced or inexperienced one. For example, they could imagine that the pilot suddenly was stricken, and they had to take over the wheel.

In preparation for *Arctic Dreams*, begin a discussion of Lopez' observation "how benign sunlight could be." Have students discuss the changes sunlight causes in different seasons and in different climates.

## FOR REINFORCEMENT / EVALUATION

The **Closure** feature in this unit provides suggestions for reinforcing and concluding classroom instruction. In addition to the **Reading Check** feature in the textbook, a *Study Guide* worksheet and a test for each selection or group of selections in the unit are available in the *Teacher's Literature Companion*.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING SCHEDULE

You will probably want to allot at least fifteen class periods for the reading and discussion of the selections in this unit. Although the ten selections are each brief enough to be read in one class period,

you will most likely want to use the additional days for the assignment of one or more individual projects related to the unit.

## USING THE FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS

This unit contains all Pupil's Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. The top margins contain teaching strategies to be used for in-class reference and for planning lessons. The side margins offer information related directly to the text that appears on the reduced pages. These side-margin annotations are designed primarily to be used after students have read the selections and can therefore serve as in-class lecture notes.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

Studies dealing with the perception of artwork show that the eye is generally drawn to the lightest areas of a painting. In this painting, the two brightest concentrations are the areas around the pitcher's mound and home plate. The eye tends to be drawn from one to the other—following precisely the path of a pitch. Thus, even though the painting is static, the central competition of a baseball game—that between pitcher and batter—is highlighted.

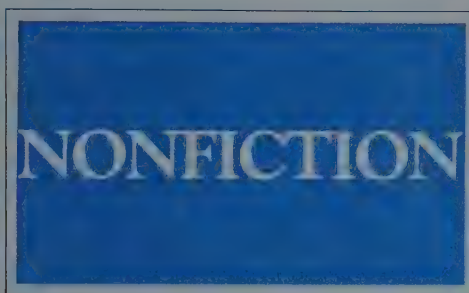
### Ideas for Writing

Nonfiction writing contains details that help readers form mental images of people, places, and objects. Before introducing the unit, ask students to study the details in Marjorie Phillips' painting and create a verbal picture of the scene.

### Relating Expression Skills

Paintings are not meant to be photographs; even realistic paintings reflect the artist's beliefs and feelings about the subject matter. You may wish to ask students to study Phillips' painting and then discuss its content and technique. Why do students think Phillips painted this picture? What is her attitude toward baseball? What does Phillips find most interesting about this scene? What is the role of the spectators in the painting? What is the relationship between Phillips' technique and the painting's content?





## NONFICTION

The essays and biographical and autobiographical sketches in this unit encompass a wide variety of topics, many of which are poignant and serious. Students will already be familiar with the **nonfiction** of newspapers and magazines but may not be as familiar with the **essay** as a means of expressing heartfelt opinion or, as Thurber does in "How to Name a Dog," of taking a humorous look at human foibles. Those students who generally have strong opinions and feelings will surely want to express themselves in one or more essays as they read the work of essayists in the first section of the unit.

Students will learn from the section of biographical and autobiographical sketches that style varies widely in **nonfiction** writing. They will also discover, however, that the common link between such diverse writing as John McPhee's hard-hitting and well-organized journalistic portrait of Bill Bradley and Twain's romantic expression of feelings about the Mississippi River is vivid **description**, the lively use of specific detail. After reading these varied sketches, students may be inspired to write their own biographical or autobiographical accounts.

Detail from *Night Baseball* (1951) by Marjorie Phillips.  
Oil on canvas.

The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.

## UNIT INTRODUCTION

**1** Narratives in this unit are biographical and autobiographical.

**2** These forms of discourse often overlap; in fact, a single piece of writing may contain all four of the forms in varying degrees.

## ESSAYS

**1** Although the range of topics for essays is open, treatment of a particular subject is limited in that the topic of an essay should be narrowly focused.

**2** "Personal point of view" suggests an opinion; good **essays** contain solid support for the opinion expressed.

**3** A **treatise** is a formal composition that treats a topic systematically.

**1** The line between *fiction* and *nonfiction* is sometimes difficult to establish, but in general we can say that fiction deals with imaginary characters and events, nonfiction with real people, their experiences and ideas. Many different kinds of writing are classified as nonfiction. Two major categories—essays and true narratives—are represented in this unit.

**2** The purpose of nonfiction may be to entertain, to inform, to explain, or to persuade. Whatever the purpose, writers make use of different forms of discourse: *description*, to give a picture of the subject and to communicate sensory impressions; *narration*, to tell about a series of events; *exposition*, to present information or to explain a subject; and *argumentation* or *persuasion*, to influence or change people's ideas or actions.

## ESSAYS

**1** It was Michel de Montaigne, the sixteenth-century French writer, who coined the word *essai* and who wrote the first modern essay. The essay for Montaigne was an attempt in prose (the French *J'essaie* means "I try") to set forth his ideas in a limited and personal manner on a wide range of topics. Although the essay has taken many forms since Montaigne, his basic definition still holds true. Today an essay can be loosely defined as a piece of prose writing that deals with its subject briefly and from a personal point of view.

**2** It is customary to classify essays as *formal* or *informal*. The formal essay is serious in tone, tightly organized, and generally objective. The informal, or *familiar*, essay may range freely over the subject; we are interested as much in the writer's personality and point of view as in what he or she has to say. Neither Montaigne nor Francis Bacon, the English writer and statesman whose *Essays* were first published in 1597, considered the essay to be a complete or thorough discussion of the subject, though the essay did become a treatise in the hands of later writers. In the hands of James Thurber, E. B. White, and other modern essayists, the essay continues to be what it was for Montaigne and Bacon. We are engaged by the writer's *style*—the way the writer uses language—as well as by the subject.

**3**



## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to think of a firmly held belief that they would like to persuade others to adopt. Have them think of ways in which they might make their opinions interesting to others (using examples, comparisons, and so on).

## PRESENTATION

This section focuses on developing the special abilities and skills that are needed to understand an **essay**. In this section, students are asked to think critically and to raise appropriate questions as they study "Security" by E. B. White. Before

students turn to the analysis at the end of "Security," you may want to ask them to draw their own conclusions about the essay. You may choose to read the selection aloud, stopping to ask questions that will help students identify and analyze the elements of the essay.

# CLOSE READING OF AN ESSAY

## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

**1** The topics of essays may vary widely. In this unit, for example, one essayist analyzes her feelings about eating certain foods; another deals with the subject of naming dogs; a third describes stages in the death of a tree; still another discusses the circumstances surrounding the publication of a famous book.

Although there is great variety in the subjects and purposes of essays, one element that all good essays share is the successful union of style and subject. As you read, you should pay close attention not only to the subject of an essay but also to its style—the choice of words and the ways in which they have been arranged. As an active reader you should be aware that the author of an essay has had to make many decisions—deleting and substituting words, rewriting phrases and sentences, perhaps rearranging entire sections of the essay in order to inform, entertain, or persuade the reader. In reading ask yourself how elements of style (imagery, metaphor, and the like) work together to convey the author's meaning and attitude toward a subject. Get into the habit of reading an essay more than once. In your first reading you can be thinking about the main point of the essay and the evidence the author presents to support that idea. In rereading pay close attention to elements of style.

Here is a brief informal essay, "Security" by E. B. White, which originally appeared in a magazine, *Harper's Monthly*. Note that White's purpose is to make us think about the concept of security. He never explicitly defines the term, but he allows us to share his observations and to draw our own conclusions. Read the essay first to determine White's main point and the examples he has selected as his evidence. On the second reading think about the elements of style that convey White's attitude toward his subject. The notes in the margin may help to guide your close study of the essay. If you wish, take notes of your own. Then proceed to the analysis on page 219.

## CLOSE READING OF AN ESSAY

**1** Brenda Peterson in "Growing up Game" conveys her feelings about eating wild animals; James Thurber's humorous essay "How to Name a Dog" deals with dogs and their owners; Edwin Way Teale's "The Death of a Tree" traces the death process of a stately oak; Geoffrey Norman discusses *Silent Spring* in "The Flight of Rachel Carson."

**2** Although any number of authors might write on the same subject, an author's **style** is uniquely his or her own.

**3** Critical reading involves more than comprehension of the text itself. Critical readers are constantly asking themselves questions about the text; they then look for answers to the questions they raise.

**4** In reading a persuasive **essay**, readers should be aware of the kind of evidence offered in support of an opinion. White offers examples in an **analogy** as supporting evidence in "Security"; however, writers also may use such evidence as factual data and expert testimony to support opinions.

5 According to White, "freemen" are those who prefer "high, breezy insecurity," who are willing to take risks; "slaves" are those who are "earthbound" in that they choose "solid support." White considers himself a member of the "freemen" group.

6 Conflict. Faces of those who are trying to decide whether to choose the safety of the ground or the freedom of the ride indicate internal conflict.

7 White expresses his feelings when at the top of the wheel: he feels "windswept and fancy free" and very much alive.

8 White keeps reader aware of the two types of individuals by contrasting his feelings with sights of those still on the ground.

## Security

E. B. WHITE

### Thinking Model

5 It was a fine clear day for the Fair this year, and I went up early to see how the Ferris wheel was doing and to take a ride. It pays to check up on Ferris wheels these days: by noting the volume of business one can get some idea which side is ahead in the world—whether the airborne freemen outnumber the earthbound slaves. It was encouraging to discover that there were still quite a few people at the Fair who preferred a feeling of high, breezy insecurity to one of solid support. My friend Healy surprised me by declining to go aloft; he is an unusually cautious man, however—even his hat is insured.

6 I like to watch the faces of people who are trying to get up their nerve to take to the air. You see them at the ticket booths in amusement parks, in the waiting room at the airport. Within them two irreconcilables<sup>1</sup> are at war—the desire for safety, the yearning for a dizzy release. My *Britannica* tells nothing about Mr. G. W. G. Ferris, but he belongs with the immortals. From the top of the wheel, seated beside a small boy, windswept and fancy free, I looked down on the Fair and for a moment was alive. Below us the old harness drivers pushed their trotters round the dirt track, old men with their legs still sticking out stiffly round the rumps of horses. And from the cluster of loud speakers atop the judges' stand came the "Indian Love Call," bathing heaven and earth in jumbo tenderness.

This silvery wheel, revolving slowly in the cause of freedom, was only just holding its

Note that White establishes a contrast between two types of individuals. What does White mean by "freemen" and "slaves"? To which group does White belong?

What conflict does White observe?

How does White feel when he is at the top of the wheel?

How does White keep us aware of the two types of individuals?

1. **irreconcilables** (ĭ-rĕk'ən-sĭ'la-bəlz): conflicting or incompatible ideas.

9

own, I soon discovered; for farther along in the midway, in a sideshow tent, a tattoo artist was doing a land-office business, not with anchors, flags, and pretty mermaids, but with Social Security Numbers, neatly pricked on your forearm with the electric needle. He had plenty of customers, mild-mannered pale men, asking glumly for the sort of indelible ignominy<sup>2</sup> that was once reserved for prisoners and beef cattle. Drab times these, when the bravado and the exhibitionism are gone from tattooing and it becomes simply a branding operation. I hope the art that produced the bird's eye view of Sydney will not be forever lost in the routine business of putting serial numbers on people who are worried about growing old.

10

11

The sight would have depressed me had I not soon won a cane by knocking over three cats with three balls. There is no moment when a man so surely has the world by the tail as when he strolls down the midway swinging a prize cane.

2. **indelible** (in-dēl'ə-bəl) **ignominy** (ig'nə-mīn'ē): permanent public disgrace or dishonor.

## Analysis

12

*Security* can be defined as "the state of being safe," and generally the word has positive associations of peace, certainty, protection. But, White suggests, the desire for security can exact a price by dulling the human spirit.

13

At the Fair White observes two kinds of people, humorously identified as "the airborne freemen," who prefer "high, breezy insecurity," and "the earthbound slaves," who choose "solid support." White is clearly on the side of the people who take to the air—who yearn for "a dizzy release" and who are willing to take some risk.

When he is at the top of the Ferris wheel, White feels carefree and alive. In contrast to the image of the silvery wheel revolving "in the cause of freedom," White presents the disheartening image of the men being tattooed with Social Security Numbers. White compares

*If the Ferris wheel represents the cause of freedom, what does the tattooing episode represent?*

*What is White's attitude toward the tattoo artist's customers?*

*White has in mind the panoramic scenes of seaports often used as subjects for tattooing.*

*How is the final paragraph related to the subject of the essay?*

9

For White, Ferris wheel represents freedom; tattoo artist represents enslavement.

10

White seems to feel that the tattoo artist's customers are branded like cattle, prisoners of their own insecurities.

11

In the final paragraph, White maintains his free spirit, even after being depressed by what he saw, implying that one has a choice in whether to be free or enslaved.

12

Analysis begins with discussion of main idea of *essay*.

13

Analysis involves examining parts to determine their relationship to the whole. Here White's comparison is discussed.



Quotations from selection being analyzed are used as evidence.

### READING AN ESSAY

1. White's purpose is to make readers think about the concept of security.
2. White's **tone** is informal and lighthearted; however, there is an underlying seriousness to the essay. White's attitude toward the examples he uses to make his point is less serious than the subject itself.
3. White gives the impression in the essay that he is fun-loving, yet he seems to be extremely concerned with human nature, as shown by his close observation.
4. White contrasts "freemen" and "slaves"; "high, breezy insecurity" with "solid support"; "desire for safety" with "the yearning for a dizzy release"; and himself and the boy on the Ferris wheel with the harness drivers on the ground.
5. White presents the "freemen" as being ahead of the "slaves," as enjoying life more thoroughly.

this operation to the branding of prisoners and cattle, and he implies that people can be imprisoned by their own insecurities.

White's spirits do not remain low for long. Winning a prize cane at one of the amusement booths gives him such a sense of well-being that he feels he has "the world by the tail." Perhaps he wishes his readers to believe that in the war of irreconcilables, the "airborne freemen" are ahead.

This analysis of "Security" is not a summary of the essay but rather an interpretation of its ideas. It attempts to explain White's attitude toward his subject and to show the connection between the different examples used in the essay.

Here are some guidelines to follow in reading an essay.

### Guidelines for Reading an Essay

1. *Determine the purpose of the essay.* Is the object to entertain, to inform, to persuade, or some combination of purposes?
2. *Determine the tone of the essay.* Is it formal or informal? Is it serious or light? Does it combine approaches?
3. *Note the personality of the writer.* What impression do you get of the writer and why?
4. *Note what the writer does with language.* Be aware of elements of style. In White's essay, for example, contrast is used as a method of organizing and presenting ideas.
5. *Determine the main idea of the essay and state it in your own words.* In "Security," White makes the point that, given the irreconcilables of the desire for safety and the yearning for freedom, he chooses the latter.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the main point of Brenda Peterson's essay "Growing Up Game." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 225 will give students practice in using context clues to define words from "Growing Up Game."

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

List on the board the names of the following animals: cows, pigs, sheep, deer, rabbits, squirrels, horses, dogs, cats. Ask students to choose those animals they would and would not eat and give reasons for their choices.

# Growing Up Game

**BRENDA PETERSON**

*The author grew up in the California Sierras, where her father worked for the Forest Service. In this essay she talks about her attitude toward hunting and eating wild animals. Her method is to select key incidents from her life and to analyze her feelings about each episode. As you read, determine why she considers the truth to be "not so simple."*

When I went off to college my father gave me, as part of my tuition, fifty pounds of moose meat. In 1969, eating moose meat at the University of California was a contradiction in terms. Hippies<sup>1</sup> didn't hunt. I lived in a rambling Victorian house which boasted sweeping circular staircases, built-in lofts, and a landlady who dreamed of opening her own health food restaurant. I told my housemates that my moose meat in its nondescript white butcher paper was from a side of beef my father had bought. The carnivores<sup>2</sup> in the house helped me finish off such suppers as sweet and sour moose meatballs, mooseburgers (garnished with the obligatory avocado and sprouts), and mooseghetti. The same dinner guests who remarked upon the lean sweetness of the meat would have recoiled if I'd told them the not-so-simple truth: that I grew up on game, and the moose they were eating had been brought down, with one shot through his magnificent

heart, by my father—a man who had hunted all his life and all of mine.

One of my earliest memories is of crawling across the vast continent of crinkled linoleum in our Forest Service cabin kitchen, down splintered back steps, through wildflowers growing wheat-high. I was eye-level with grasshoppers who scolded me on my first solo trip outside. I made it to the shed, a cool and comefortingly square shelter that held phantasmagoric<sup>3</sup> metal parts; they smelled good, like dirt and grease. I had played a long time in this shed before some maternal shriek made me lift up on my haunches to listen to those urgent, possessive sounds that were my name. Rearing up, my head bumped into something hanging in the dark; gleaming white, it felt sleek and cold against my cheek. Its smell was dense and musty and not unlike the slabs of my grandmother's great arms after her cool, evening sponge baths. In that shed I looked up and saw

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote explains that the author offers evidence for her mixed emotions toward hunting and eating wild animals. Ask students to speculate on possible incidents that might lead to such a conflict of feelings.

## Growing Up Game

After students have read the essay, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of the main idea.

**1** Hippies advocated love and peace; their creed included an aversion to violent acts against humans and animals.

**2** What is implied about the people in the house who were not "carnivores"? They were vegetarians.

**3** The exotic nature of the moose is hidden as it is transformed into ordinary dishes.

**4** Irony. Guests prefer taste of game, which they would not consciously have eaten, to that of domestic meat, which they do not object to eating.

**5** "Phantasmagoric" suggests that items were strange and foreign to a baby.

**6** Emphasizes child's perspective in contrast to adult's perspective.

**7** Imagery. Description appeals to senses of hearing, sight, touch, and smell.

1. **Hippies**: a group with unconventional ideas about dress, work, and living habits.

2. **carnivores** (kār'nā-vōrz', -vōrz'): flesh-eaters.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 21 / Selection Test 21 / Reading Check 21 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 21

3. **phantasmagoric** (fān-tāz'mā-gōr'ik): fantastic and dreamlike.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Brenda Peterson explores the complexities that abound in life, underlying even such seemingly simple choices as whether or not to eat the flesh of wild animals. She uses the topic of killing and eating game as a **metaphor** for life itself.

## PRESENTATION

The real purpose of this essay may be difficult for students to understand unless you first discuss with them the difference between **subject** and **theme**. Students should have no trouble identifying the subject—the author's feelings toward

hunting and eating wild animals. However, they might be tempted to react emotionally to the incidents through which she expresses her feelings; or they might misunderstand the essay as advocating readers' adoption of a specified position on hunting or eating wild animals and

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Winslow Homer was for seventeen years a free-lance illustrator. He closely observed American life, and his work was reproduced in magazines such as *Harper's Monthly*. In 1881 he moved to the coast of Maine and began the phase of his career for which he is most noted—producing large oil paintings of American scenes. Although the coastal fishermen, depicted against the backdrop of a gray and powerful sea, were his most frequent subjects during this period, he also created scenes of the American frontier. Homer's powerfully dramatic paintings often portray the conflict between humans and the natural world.

F

Use to answer study question 2a, p. 225.

9

Although child feels horror at seeing dead animal, she already associates animal with food.

10

Although *tribe* may refer to any community of people with common ancestry and leadership, implication here is that life style resembles that of Native Americans.



*Huntsman and Dogs* (1891) by Winslow Homer (1836–1910). Oil on canvas.

the flensed<sup>4</sup> body of a doe; it swung gently, 8 slapping my face. I felt then as I do even now 10 when eating game: horror and awe and hunger.

Growing up those first years on a forest sta-

4. **flensed** (flɛnsd): stripped of its skin.

tion high in the Sierra<sup>5</sup> was somewhat like be- longing to a white tribe. The men hiked off every day into their forest and the women stayed behind in the circle of official cabins, breeding. So far away from a store, we ate veni-

5. **Sierra** (sē-ēr'ə): in northeastern California.



therefore object to it. Either of these reactions will prevent students from understanding the underlying theme of the essay—that people must make their own choices, based upon the understanding of their experiences. Nowhere does Peterson say, “Eating game is wrong” or

“Eating game is right.” To do so would have undermined her thesis that truth is not simple.

You may wish to approach this essay in two stages—discussing subject first and theme second. Remind the class that while the subject of a work is usually specific, limited in time and place,

the theme is general, applicable to the reader as well as the writer. For serious writers, the subject is merely an interesting way to present something more important—the theme.



Philadelphia Museum of Art

fragile bones to slither one's way through; we also ate salmon, rabbit, and geese galore. The game was accompanied by such daily garden dainties as fried okra, mustard greens, corn fritters, wilted lettuce (our favorite because of that rare, blackened bacon), new potatoes and peas, stewed tomatoes, barbecued butter beans.

I was four before I ever had a beef hamburger and I remember being disappointed by its fatty, nothing taste and the way it fell apart at the seams whenever my teeth sank into it.

13 Smoked pork shoulder came much later in the South; and I was twenty-one, living in New York City, before I ever tasted leg of lamb. I approached that glazed rack of meat with a

14 certain guilty self-consciousness, as if I unfairly stalked those sweet-tempered white creatures myself. But how would I explain my squeamishness to those urban sophisticates? How explain that I was shy with mutton when I had been bred on wild things?

Part of it, I suspect, had to do with the belief I'd also been bred on—we become the spirit and body of animals we eat. As a child eating venison I liked to think of myself as lean and

15 lovely just like the deer. I would never be caught dead just grazing while some man who wasn't even a skillful hunter crept up and knocked me over the head. If someone wanted to hunt me, he must be wily and outwitting. He must earn me.

16 My father had also taught us as children that animals were our brothers and sisters under their skin. They died so that we might live.

17 And of this sacrifice we must be mindful. “God make us grateful for what we are about to receive,” took on a new meaning when one knew the animal's struggle pitted against our own

appetite. We also used *all* the animal so that an elk became elk steaks, stew, salami, and sausage. His head and horns went on the wall to watch us more earnestly than any babysitter,

11

Each year when a rattlesnake sheds its skin, another horn-like ring forms at the end of its tail. While the source is unconventional, these snake rattles would be just as pleasing to a baby as plastic ones.

12

Many people consider rattlesnake meat a delicacy; others shudder at the thought of eating such a deadly creature.

13

Meat from animals raised for human consumption has much the same place in Peterson's diet as wild game might in the diet of the majority of Americans.

14

Use to answer study question 3a, p. 225.

15

Author believes that hunting deserves respect only when hunter and hunted are worthy adversaries.

16

Use to answer study question 4a, p. 225.

17

*What does the father teach the children about their relationship with animals?* To be mindful of each animal's struggle, grateful for its sacrifice, and careful to use all the animal.

son and squirrel, rattlesnake and duck. My 11 brother's first rattle, in fact, was from a King Rattler my father killed as we watched, by snatching it up with a stick and winding it, whiplike, around a redwood sapling. Rattle- 12 snake tastes just like chicken, but has many

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage can be used to give students practice in the reading skill of drawing logical conclusions. Ask students to choose the answer that draws a reasonable conclusion from information in the passage.

A. Father was unable to eat lamb ever again. (Statement unsupported by passage.) B. Siblings had no qualms about eating the pet lamb. (Contradicted by information in the passage.) C. Seeing pet on plate makes Father realize sacrifices animals make to sustain human life. (Correct.)

D. Father was used to eating animals raised on the farm, but only if he killed them himself. (Only part of this statement supported by information in the passage.)

18

Dangers of the fire and rigorous competition for scarce food after the fire would ensure that only the fittest and wildest would survive.

19

*What does Peterson mean by "something else coursing through their veins"? Enthusiasm and determination to bring back meat for their families.*

20

**Imagery.** With painful clarity, the author recalls details about the dead doe; author sees things in a new way, an experience that is called an epiphany.

21

This incident causes Peterson to become acutely aware of eating as a conscious choice, and this choice is not a simple one. She knows that life must be sacrificed to sustain life. Now she must take on not only the body and spirit of the animals she eats, but the death as well.

22

Use to answer study question 5, p. 225.

23

Use to answer study question 3b, p. 225.

24

**Theme.** Peterson recognizes and accepts her mixed feelings about hunting and eating game. She has outgrown the simple truths of childhood and has become responsible for her actions and their effects on others.

and every Christmas Eve we had a ceremony of making our own moccasins for the new year out of whatever Father had tanned. "Nothing wasted," my father would always say, or, as we munched on sausage cookies made from moosemeat or venison, "Think about who you're eating." We thought of ourselves as intricately linked to the food chain. We knew, for example, that a forest fire meant, at the end of the line, we'd suffer too. We'd have buck stew instead of venison steak and the meat would be stringy, withered-tasting because in the animal kingdom, as it seemed with humans, only the meanest and leanest and orneriest survived.

Once when I was in my early teens, I went along on a hunting trip as the "main cook and bottle-washer," though I don't remember any bottles; none of these hunters drank alcohol.

19 There was something else coursing through their veins as they rose long before dawn and disappeared, returning to my little camp most often dragging a doe or pheasant or rabbit. We ate innumerable cornmeal-fried catfish, had rabbit stew seasoned only with blood and black pepper.

This hunting trip was the first time I remember eating game as a conscious act. My father and Buddy Earl shot a big doe and she lay with me in the back of the tarp-draped station

20 wagon all the way home. It was not the smell I minded, it was the glazed great, dark eyes and the way that head flopped around crazily on what I knew was once a graceful neck. I found myself petting this doe, murmuring all those graces we'd been taught long ago as children.

21 *Thank you for the sacrifice, thank you for letting us be like you so that we can grow up strong as game.* But there was an uneasiness in me that night as I bounced along in the back of the car with the deer.

22 What was uneasy is still uneasy—perhaps it always will be. It's not easy when one really starts thinking about all this: the eating game,

the food chain, the sacrifice of one for the other. It's never easy when one begins to think about one's most basic actions, like eating. Like becoming what one eats: lean and lovely and mortal.

Why should it be that the purchase of meat at a butcher shop is somehow more righteous than eating something wild? Perhaps it has to do with our collective unconscious<sup>6</sup> that sees the animal bred for slaughter as doomed. But that wild doe or moose might make it without the hunter. Perhaps on this primitive level of archetype<sup>7</sup> and unconscious knowing we even believe that what's wild lives forever.

► My father once told this story around a hunting campfire. His own father, who raised cattle during the Depression<sup>8</sup> on a dirt farm in the Ozarks,<sup>9</sup> once fell on such hard times that he had to butcher the pet lamb for supper. My father, bred on game or their own hogs all his life, took one look at the family pet on that meat platter and pushed his plate away from him. His siblings followed suit. To hear my grandfather tell it, it was the funniest thing he'd ever seen. "They just couldn't eat Bo-Peep," Grandfather said. And to hear my father tell it years later around that campfire, it was funny, but I saw for the first time his sadness. And I realized that eating had become a conscious act for him that day at the dinner table when Bo-Peep offered herself up. ◀

Now when someone offers me game I will eat it with all the qualms and memories and reverence with which I grew up eating it. And I think it will always be this feeling of horror and awe and hunger. And something else—full knowledge of what I do, what I become.

6. **collective unconscious:** deeply embedded psychological experiences that all individuals share.

7. **archetype** (är'ka-tip'): a first model or type.

8. **Depression:** the Great Depression of the 1930s.

9. **Ozarks** (ô'zarks): Ozark Mountains extending from southeast Missouri across northwest Arkansas into eastern Oklahoma.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to state the main point of Peterson's "Growing Up Game" and recall the incidents from her own childhood that she uses as evidence.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students write an essay about their own attitudes toward hunting and eating wild animals, explaining the role their childhood and family environment may have played in their position.

Ask students to write a paper describing some event in their lives when they suddenly saw familiar things in a new way.

A growing number of animal-rights groups across the country provide information about their organizations and purposes. Students

### Reading Check

1. What did the author's housemates and dinner guests believe they were eating when she served moose meat?
2. What was the author's first reaction to beef?
3. What kinds of meat did the family live on when she was growing up?
4. In addition to food, what other uses were made of game?
5. Why was her father unable to eat the lamb that was served at dinner?

raised on? **b.** What attitude toward nature is revealed in these beliefs?

**5.** During a hunting trip the author says she became aware of eating game as "a conscious act." To what does she attribute her uneasiness?

**6.** At the conclusion of an essay, a writer will often restate his or her main point. **a.** Pick out a sentence in the last paragraph in which Peterson answers her implied question about the "not-so-simple truth" posed in the introduction. **b.** Has she given evidence of this conflict throughout the essay?

**7.** Explain the title of the essay.

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Essay

**1.** At the opening of the essay, Peterson recalls an experience from college days that provides a point of departure for the essay. **a.** What does the episode reveal about people's attitudes toward eating game? **b.** What irony is involved in the reactions of her dinner guests to the "lean sweetness" of the moose meat?

**2.** In the second paragraph of the essay, Peterson recalls playing in a shed where she came in contact with the flesh of a doe. **a.** How did she feel? **b.** Where else in the essay does she experience a similar mixture of emotions?

**3.** Peterson says that she felt a "guilty self-consciousness" about eating leg of lamb. **a.** How do you account for her squeamishness? **b.** How does the anecdote about Bo-Peep at the end of the essay relate to this episode?

**4.** The author was raised on the belief that hunters "become the spirit and body of animals" they eat. **a.** What other belief was she

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Using Context Clues

The *context* of a word can help you determine its meaning. The context may be a single sentence, a passage, or even a whole work. Consider the word *game* in the title of Peterson's essay. What different meanings of the word are suggested by the essay as a whole?

**2** Use context clues to define the italicized words in the following excerpts from the essay. Check your answers in the glossary or in a dictionary.

- a** I told my housemates that my moose meat in its *nondescript* white butcher paper was from a side of beef. . .
- b** If someone wanted to hunt me, he must be *wily* and outwitting.
- c** Why should it be that the purchase of meat at a butcher shop is somehow more *righteous* than eating something wild?

#### READING CHECK

1. Beef (p. 221).
2. Did not like it; it had no flavor and fell apart (p. 223).
3. Venison, squirrel, rattlesnake, duck, rabbit, geese (p. 223).
4. Hides for moccasins; horns as decoration (pp. 223–224).
5. Had been a pet (p. 224).

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** Based on principle rather than taste preference. **1b.** They actually prefer it to domestic meat but would not consciously have eaten it.

**2a.** Felt horror, awe, and hunger. **2b.** Last paragraph describes feelings she still has when she eats game.

**3a.** Thinks of sheep as "sweet-tempered," without skills to defend themselves; believes she takes on characteristics of what she eats. **3b.** Her father had also been troubled at thought of eating sheep.

**4a.** That animals were her brothers and sisters. **4b.** Interdependency of all species leads to great respect for nature.

**5.** Had begun to think about food chain, sacrifices of one life for another, and idea that she too is mortal.

**6a.** Second sentence of last paragraph restates conflict when she eats game, but following fragment reinforces theme of self-awareness that marks the conflict. **6b.** Yes, in each example.

**7.** "Game" represents both the wild creatures Peterson ate and her taking on their qualities of courage and nobility, condition we describe as "being game."

#### LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Game* can mean sport or contest and also courage.
- 2a.** *Nondescript*: lacking marks of identification.
- 2b.** *Wily*: clever, sly, cunning.
- 2c.** *Righteous*: morally correct.



might be interested in contacting one of these groups and reporting their findings to the class.

There are many people who do not eat meat at all and still others who do not eat meat or any animal products such as butter, cheese, and any

food cooked with animal fat. Some students might interview members of a local vegetarian society about the reasons for giving up meat.

Students might interview local game wardens or people they know who hunt and fish, preparing a list of questions beforehand to learn more

about the attitudes of these people.

The *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* lists many articles about hunting, animal rights, wild-animal preserves, vegetarianism, and other related topics. Ask students to choose one such topic and report their findings to the class.

### FOR ORAL EXPRESSION

Before students conduct their interviews, you may want to offer a one-day "minicourse" on interviewing techniques. In addition, students might find it worthwhile to practice asking warm-up questions to a classroom partner. In this way, they will be able to learn which types of questions are most effective. You may wish to remind students that reporters concentrate on asking *who?* *what?* *where?* *when?* *why?* and *how?* about every subject.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Students will probably find Peterson to be an effective writer, even if they have little interest in hunting. Part of Peterson's appeal comes from her mastery of prose style. When she writes of a "rambling Victorian house" (p. 221), the sentence too rambles—all the way to the aspirations of its landlady. When she wants to convey an important idea, she is also capable of writing brief, crisp sentences like "Hippies didn't hunt."

## For Oral Expression

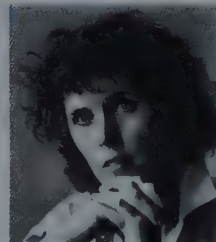
### Holding an Interview

Plan to interview a relative or neighbor about some episode in the past. For example, if you know someone who lived through the Great Depression, does he or she have any stories of hardship comparable to that of Bo-Peep? Give thought to your questions so that you invite extended replies instead of *yes* and *no* answers. Give the other person time to respond to your questions. During the interview take notes or ask permission to use a tape recorder. If you use a recorder, you should agree to play back the tape and have the interviewee make desired changes.

You can make your interview the subject of an oral report or a composition.

## About the Author

### Brenda Peterson (1950– )



Brenda Peterson was born in Quincy, California, but she considers her roots to be Southern. Her family moved wherever her father's forestry work took them. She spent the first part of her childhood in California, then moved to Virginia and later to Georgia. After graduating from the University of California at Davis, she worked for *The New Yorker*. Her first novel, *River of Light*, was published in 1978. She now lives on a farm in the Denver area.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify and explain what the essay reveals about Thurber. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activities on p. 232 will give students practice in recognizing words used for humorous effect and in determining the exact meanings of selected words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to think of names of pets they have known. Did they seem to be appropriate to the animals? Or were the names pretentious, humorous, or flippant? What would they name their pets if they had a chance to rename them?

# How to Name a Dog

**JAMES THURBER**

*Thurber is a master of the informal essay. One of his methods as an essayist and satirist is to focus on a subject or area of experience, and to range freely, introducing ideas and experiences not always closely related to the subject he began with. This is the method of the conversationalist. Thurber shares with the reader his amusement over human foibles—the comic oddities of character rather than its faults.*

*As you read, note that Thurber reveals as much about himself as he does about his subject.*

1 Every few months somebody writes me and asks if I will give him a name for his dog. Several of these correspondents in the past year have wanted to know if I would mind the use of my own name for their spaniels. Spaniel-owners seem to have the notion that a person could sue for invasion of privacy or defamation of character if his name were applied to a cocker without written permission, and one gentleman even insisted that we conduct our correspondence in the matter through a notary public. I have a way of letting communications of this sort fall behind my roll-top desk, but it has recently occurred to me that this is an act of evasion, if not, indeed, of plain cowardice. I have therefore decided to come straight out with the simple truth that it is as hard for me to think up a name for a dog as it is for anybody else. The idea that I am an expert in the business is probably the outcome of a piece I wrote several years ago, incautiously revealing the fact that I have owned forty or more dogs in my life. This is true, but it is also deceptive.

All but five or six of my dogs were disposed of when they were puppies, and I had not gone to the trouble of giving to these impermanent residents of my house any names at all except Shut Up! and Cut That Out! and Let Go!

5 Names of dogs end up in 176th place in the list of things that amaze and fascinate me. Canine cognomens should be designed to impinge on the ears of dogs and not to amuse neighbors, tradespeople, and casual visitors. I remember a few dogs from the past with a faint but lingering pleasure: a farm hound named Rain, a roving Airedale named Marco Polo, a female bull terrier known as Brody<sup>1</sup> because she liked to jump from moving motor cars and second-story windows, and a Peke called Darien;<sup>2</sup> but that's all.

1. **Brody:** A man named Steven Brodie pretended to jump off the Brooklyn Bridge in 1886.

2. **Peke called Darien:** *Peke* is short for Pekingese. Thurber is punning on the phrase "a peak in Darien" from the sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" by John Keats.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote discusses the conversational **style** of Thurber—his use of digressions to make wry comments on the peculiarities of human behavior, including his own. Encourage students to note, as they read, any passages that provide insight into Thurber's personality.

## How to Name a Dog

After students have read the essay, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of Thurber's personality and humorous style.

1

Requests result from people's belief that Thurber has some special knowledge of dogs and perhaps from admiration for his sense of humor.

2

**Characterization.** Thurber creates humor by stereotyping spaniel owners.

3

*What does Thurber imply when he admits to "letting" some letters "fall behind" his desk? He intentionally loses them to avoid answering them.*

4

In "The Dog that Bit People," Thurber claims that of all his "fifty-four or -five" dogs, an Airedale named Muggs gave him the most trouble.

5

**Diction.** Here Thurber uses elevated language (for example, "canine cognomens") to create a humorous effect.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Despite Thurber's claim that his essay should probably be called "How Not to Name a Dog," he *does* write about how to name dogs. In addition, he also tells of the people who name their dogs and his reaction to those people.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

Thurber is known for his gentle satire of man and beast. In this cartoon, Thurber humorously depicts, with an economy of line, a dog that is both asleep and alert. Thurber sometimes tells his stories from a dog's point of view, allowing the canine to comment on the human's world from a detached and resigned perspective.

6

**Satire.** Subtle comment on superficiality of society (concern for appearances).

7

Thurber's own visual problems might partially explain this special interest in seeing-eye dogs.

8

German shepherds are most commonly used as seeing-eye dogs; however, other breeds such as boxers are also used.

9

Thurber's humor here derives from the rarity of such a situation and the attribution of humanlike reactions to the dog.

10

Seeing-eye dogs and their owners undergo intensive training together.

11

**Style.** As in rambling conversation, Thurber returns to the earlier subject of puppies, a subject briefly mentioned on p. 227; discursiveness is characteristic of Thurber's informal style.

## PRESENTATION

Thurber's effectiveness as a humorist derives, at least partly, from his ability to attack a subject indirectly. This essay deals far more with what the process of choosing a name says about the human than it does with simply naming a dog.

Because he finds many dog owners to be silly, Thurber constructs the essay in such a way that he keeps straying or digressing to comment on human foibles associated with dogs. Explain to students that this seeming failure to stick to the subject is intentional—a technique of a satirist.



© James Thurber, Helen Thurber

Well, there is Poker, alias *Fantôme Noir*,<sup>3</sup> a miniature black poodle I have come to know since I wrote the preceding paragraphs. Poker, familiarly known as Pokey, belongs to Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Gude, of White Plains, and when they registered him with the American Kennel Club they decided he needed a more dignified name. It wasn't easy to explain this to their youngest child, David, and his parents never did quite clear it up for him. When he was only eight, David thought the problem over for a long while and then asked his father solemnly, "If he belongs to that club, why doesn't he ever go there?" Since I wrote this piece originally, I have also heard about a sheepdog named Jupiter, which used to belong to Jimmy Cannon, journalist, critic, and man about dog shows. He reported in a recent column of his that Jupiter used to eat geraniums. I have heard of other dogs that ate flowers, but I refuse to be astonished by this until I learn of one that's downed a nasturtium.

The only animals whose naming demands concentration, hard work, and ingenuity are the seeing-eye dogs. They have to be given unusual names because passers-by like to call to seeing-eyers—"Here, Sport" or "Yuh, Rags" or "Don't take any wooden nickels, Rin Tin Tin." A blind man's dog with an ordinary name

would continually be distracted from its work. A tyro at naming these dogs might make the mistake of picking Durocher<sup>4</sup> or Teetfallow.<sup>5</sup> The former is too much like Rover and the latter could easily sound like "Here, fellow" to a dog. Ten years ago I met a young man in his twenties who had been mysteriously blind for nearly five years and had been led about by a seeing-eye German shepherd during all of that time, which included several years of study at Yale. Then suddenly one night the dog's owner began to get his vision back, and within a few weeks was able to read the fine print of a telephone book. The effect on his dog was almost disastrous, and it went into a kind of nervous crackup, since these animals are trained to the knowledge, or belief, that their owners are permanently blind. After the owner regained his vision he kept his dog, of course, not only because they had become attached to each other but because the average seeing-eye dog cannot be transferred from one person to another.

Speaking of puppies, as I was a while back, I feel that I should warn inexperienced dog-owners who have discovered to their surprise and dismay a dozen puppies in a hall closet or under the floor of the barn, not to give them

4. **Durocher:** Leo Durocher, a manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers.

5. **Teetfallow:** the title of a book by T. S. Stribling, published in the 1920's.

3. *Fantôme Noir* (fàn'tôm nwâr): French for "black phantom."



away. Sell them or keep them, but don't give them away. Sixty percent of persons who are given a dog for nothing bring him back sooner or later and plump him into the reluctant and unprepared lap of his former owner. The people say that they are going to Florida and can't take the dog, or that he doesn't want to go; or they point out that he eats first editions or lace curtains or spinets, or that he doesn't see eye to eye with them in the matter of housebreaking, or that he makes disparaging remarks under his breath about their friends. Anyway, they bring him back and you are stuck with him—and maybe six others. But if you charge ten or even five dollars for pups, the new owners

12 don't dare return them. They are afraid to ask for their money back because they believe you might think they are hard up and need the five or ten dollars. Furthermore, when a mischievous puppy is returned to its former owner it invariably behaves beautifully, and the person who brought it back is likely to be regarded as an imbecile or a dog-hater or both.

Names of dogs, to get back to our subject,

14 have a range almost as wide as that of the violin. They run from such plain and simple names as Spot, Sport, Rex, Brownie to fancy appellations such as Prince Rudolph Hertenberg Gratzheim of Darndorf-Putzelhorst, and Darling Mist o' Love III of Heather-Light-Holyrood—names originated by adults, all of whom in every other way, I am told, have made a normal adjustment to life. In addition to the plain and fancy categories,

16 there are the Cynical and the Coy. Cynical names are given by people who do not like dogs too much. The most popular cynical names during the war<sup>6</sup> were Mussolini, Tojo, and Adolf. I never have been able to get very far in my exploration of the minds of people who call their dogs Mussolini, Tojo, and Adolf,

6. war: World War II.

18 and I suspect the reason is that I am unable to associate with them long enough to examine what goes on in their heads. I nod, and I tell them the time of day, if they ask, and that is all. I never vote for them or ask them to have a drink. The great Coy category is perhaps the largest. The Coy people call their pets Bubbles and Boggles and Sparkles and Twinkles and Doodles and Puffy and Lovums and Sweetums and Itsy-Bitsy and Betsy-Bye-Bye and Sugarkins. I pass these dog-owners at a dog-trot, wearing a horrible fixed grin.

There is a special subdivision of the Coys that is not quite so awful, but awful enough. These people, whom we will call the Wits, own two dogs, which they name Pitter and Patter, Willy and Nilly, Helter and Skelter, Namby and Pamby, Hugger and Mugger, and even Wishy and Washy, Ups and Daisy, Fitz and Startz, Fetch and Carrie, and Pro and Connie. Then there is the Cryptic category. These people select names for some private reason or for no reason at all—except perhaps to arouse a visitor's curiosity, so that he will exclaim, "Why in the world do you call your dog *that*?" The Cryptic name their dogs October, Bennett's Aunt, Three Fifteen, Doc Knows, Tuesday, Home Fried, Opus 38, Ask Leslie, and Thanks

20 for the Home Run, Emil. I make it a point simply to pat these unfortunate dogs on the head, ask no question of their owners, and go about my business.

This article has degenerated into a piece that properly should be entitled "How Not to Name a Dog." I was afraid it would. It seems only fair to make up for this by confessing a few of the names I have given my own dogs, with the considerable help, if not, indeed, the insistence, of their mistress. Most of my dogs have been females, and they have answered, with apparent gladness, to such names as Jennie, Tessa, Julie, and Sophie. I have never owned a dog named Pamela, Jennifer,

12

Thurber digresses to the subject of what to do with unwanted puppies.

13

*What does Thurber imply is the real reason that people will not return puppies they have bought?* Their pride keeps them from asking for their money back.

14

Unexpected comparison playfully inflates the subject.

15

*Satire.* With the assertion that "in every other way" the dog owners are normal, Thurber implies that on basis of dogs' names, the owners might be regarded as eccentric.

16

Use to answer study question 2c, p. 231.

17

General Hideki Tojo of Japan, Premier Benito Mussolini of Italy, and Chancellor Adolf Hitler of Germany led their nations against the Allies in World War II.

18

*Irony.* Thurber reveals a cynical attitude toward cynical people.

19

*Irony.* Thurber ridicules pretentiousness by displaying an affected facial expression.

20

Thurber determines not to accommodate owners' desire to be questioned about the names.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Although Thurber published a book of drawings entitled *Men, Women, and Dogs* in 1943, most of his illustrations were created to accompany his stories. His most famous artistic creation was the dog Thurberhound, a bloodhound type with abbreviated legs.

21

Illustrates Thurber's statement about spaniel owners—Stong's embarrassment is attributable to having named his dog Thurber without first obtaining the writer's permission.

22

**Style.** Illustrates Thurber's discursive technique as he returns to his subject after anecdote about Mr. Stong.

23

**Why does Thurber suggest the name "Stong" to dog owners?** He is avenging himself on Phil Stong, who named his dog Thurber.

24

**Personification.** Thurber depicts his poodle as a proper matron who does not approve of "unannounced" callers.

25

**Characterization.** Use of "high dismay" and "indignation" emphasizes personality of Christabel as "imperious," haughty.



© James Thurber, Helen Thurber

Clarissa, Jacqueline, Guinevere, or Shelmerdene.

About fifteen years ago, when I was looking for a house to buy in Connecticut, I knocked on the front door of an attractive home whose owner, my real-estate agent had told me, wanted to sell it and go back to Iowa to live. The lady agent who escorted me around had informed me that the owner of this place was a man named Strong, but a few minutes after arriving at the house, I was having a drink in the living room with Phil Stong,<sup>7</sup> for it was he. We went out into the yard after a while and I saw Mr. Stong's spaniel. I called to the dog and snapped my fingers, but he seemed curiously embarrassed, like his master. "What's his name?" I asked the latter. He was cornered

21 and there was no way out of it. "Thurber," he said, in a small frightened voice. Thurber and

I shook hands, and he didn't seem to me any more depressed than any other spaniel I have met. He had, however, the expression of a bachelor on his way to a party he has tried in vain to get out of, and I think it must have been this cast of countenance that had reminded Mr. Stong of the dog I draw. The dog I draw is, to be sure, much larger than a spaniel and not so shaggy, but I confess, though I am not a spaniel man, that there are certain basic resemblances between my dog and all other dogs with long ears and troubled eyes.

22 Perhaps I should suggest at least one name for a dog, if only to justify the title of this piece. All right, then, what's the matter with Stong?

23 It's a good name for a dog, short, firm, and effective. I recommend it to all those who have written to me for suggestions and to all those who may be at this very moment turning over in their minds the idea of asking my advice in this difficult and perplexing field of nomenclature.

Since I first set down these not too invaluable rules for naming dogs, I have heard of at least a dozen basset hounds named Thurber, a Newfoundland called Little Bears Thurber and a bloodhound named Tiffany's Thurber. This is all right with me, so long as the owners of Thurbers do not bring them to call on me at my house in Connecticut without making arrangements in advance. Christabel, my old and imperious poodle, does not like unannounced dog visitors, and tries to get them out of the house as fast as she can. Two years ago a Hartford dog got lost in my neighborhood and finally showed up at my house. He hadn't had much, if anything, to eat for several days, and we fed him twice within three hours, to the high dismay and indignation of Christabel, who only gets one big meal a day. The wanderer was returned to its owner, through a story in the *Hartford Courant*, and quiet descended on my home until a handsome young

7. **Phil Stong:** American writer (1899–1957), author of *State Fair*.

male collie showed up one night. We had quite a time getting him out of the house. Christabel kept telling him how wonderful it was outdoors and trotting to the door, but the collie wasn't interested. I tried to pick him up, but I am too old to pick up a full-grown collie. In the end Christabel solved the problem herself by leading him outside on the promise of letting him chew one of the bones she had buried. He still keeps coming back to visit us from time to time, but Christabel has hidden her bones in new places. She will romp with the young visitor for about twenty seconds, then show her teeth and send him home. I don't do anything

26 about the situation. After all, my home has been in charge of Christabel for a great many years now, and I never interfere with a woman's ruling a household.

### Reading Check

1. According to Thurber, which dogs require unusual names?
2. Why does Thurber advise dog owners to sell their puppies rather than give them away?
3. What does Thurber think would be a more appropriate title for his essay?
4. What is the one name Thurber suggests for a dog?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Essay

1. An informal essay may reveal as much about the personality of its author as it does about its subject. **a.** What impression do you get of Thurber from his various comments in the opening paragraph? **b.** Would you say that he is tolerant or intolerant of people's quirks and foibles? **c.** Does he have a sense of humor about himself as well as about others?

2. Thurber's essay points out that the naming of a dog reveals something of the owner's personality. **a.** What incident shows that Poker's owners are snobs? **b.** What is special about spaniel-owners? **c.** According to Thurber, what do the Cynical, Coy, and Cryptic categories of names tell about dog-owners?

3. An informal essay is often written in a conversational style complete with digressions and humorous anecdotes. **a.** At what points in the essay does Thurber let on that he has wandered from the subject? **b.** How does he make a return to the subject?

4a. How does Thurber show that he credits his dogs with intelligence and with individual personalities? **b.** What do the names he chose for his own dogs tell you about him? **c.** Would you consider him a genuine dog-lover?

26

Thurber concludes essay with gentle humor as he admits that Christabel rules his household.

### READING CHECK

1. Seeing-eye dogs (p. 228).
2. People who pay for dogs will not return them (p. 229).
3. "How Not to Name a Dog" (p. 229).
4. Stong (p. 230).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Responses will vary. He is quick to name his deficiencies: does not answer some of his letters; has trouble naming dogs himself; has had share of trouble with puppies. 1b. Enjoys poking fun at other people's quirks and foibles. 1c. He seems willing to poke fun at his own quirks and foibles.

2a. They renamed dog *Fantôme Noir*, a rather pretentious name, when they decided to register him. 2b. They seem to think they might be sued if they use a person's name for a dog without obtaining permission. 2c. Cynical names are chosen by "people who do not like dogs too much"; coy names are chosen by people who are sentimental and foolish; cryptic names are chosen by people who want to arouse curiosity.

3a. Paragraph 5: "Speaking of puppies"; paragraph 6: "to get back to our subject"; paragraph 9: "About fifteen years. . . ." 3b. In paragraph 10 he says, "Perhaps I should suggest at least one name. . . ."

4a. Tells about how Christabel deals with unwanted dog visitors.

4b. Responses will vary. Respects dogs as individuals. 4c. Responses will vary. Seems to enjoy dog foibles, but does not pretend to be an authority on dogs.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify elements of Thurber's personality and **style** that contribute to the humorous effect of the essay.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ask students to write a paper about pets they have had and the names of those animals, explaining if possible how the names were chosen.

Have students who own dogs place them-

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Opening sentence of paragraph 7 states a subject. Opening sentences of paragraphs 5 and 6 state central idea.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

Recognizing Words Used for Humorous Effect

1. Some examples are "nomenclature," "cast of countenance," "appellations."

Determining Exact Meanings

1. *Evasion*: avoiding duty.

*Ingenuity*: cleverness.

*Dismay*: discouragement.

*Cynical*: sarcastic.

*Coy*: playful.

*Cryptic*: mysterious.

*Degenerated*: deteriorated.

*Cast of countenance*: appearance.

## Literary Elements

### Opening Sentences

Paragraphs usually begin with a **topic sentence**, a sentence that gives the central idea. Sometimes the central idea is not given until later in the paragraph. The opening sentence, then, states the subject of the paragraph only, and serves as a signpost to the reader.

The opening sentence of the third paragraph in Thurber's essay states the subject only:

Well, there is Poker . . . a miniature black poodle I have come to know since I wrote the preceding paragraphs.

The opening sentence of the fourth paragraph states the central idea:

The only animals whose naming demands concentration, hard work, and ingenuity are the seeing-eye dogs.

1 Which of Thurber's opening sentences resemble the first sentence, and which resemble the second?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Words Used for Humorous Effect

Thurber uses the fancy word *cognomen* in place of the simple word *name* for humorous effect in the following sentence:

Canine cognomens should be designed to impinge on the ears of dogs and not to amuse neighbors, tradespeople, and casual visitors.

1 Find other examples in the essay of words and names chosen or cited for their humor.

### Determining Exact Meanings

Thurber chooses words for their exact meanings. The words *impinge on* in the sentence quoted above carry the meaning of "colliding with"—and that is the exact meaning Thurber wants in his sentence. The name should catch the attention of the dog, make its ears perk

1 up—in short, collide with the dog. Look up the italicized words in the following sentences and explain how each word or phrase is used:

I have a way of letting communications of this sort fall behind my roll-top desk, but it has recently occurred to me that this is an act of *evasion*, if not, indeed, of plain cowardice.

The only animals whose naming demands concentration, hard work, and *ingenuity* are the seeing-eye dogs.

. . . I feel that I should warn inexperienced dog-owners who have discovered to their surprise and *dismay* a dozen puppies in a hall closet or under the floor of the barn, not to give them away.

*Cynical* names are given by people who do not like dogs too much.

The great *Coy* category is perhaps the largest.

Then there is the *Cryptic* category.

This article has *degenerated* into a piece that properly should be entitled "How Not to Name a Dog."

. . . I think it must have been this *cast of countenance* that had reminded Mr. Stong of the dog I draw.

selves in one of Thurber's categories, based upon the names of their dogs, and then write an essay agreeing or disagreeing with his assessment of people in this group.

Request that students make a list of the strangest names they have heard for cats and

then classify them as Thurber does, identifying specific characteristics of cats, names, and owners.

Thurber was a popular cartoonist as well as an essayist, and his work often featured a strange-looking dog called Thurberhound. Some stu-

dents might enjoy creating a series of cartoons featuring their own pets, either as protagonists or as observers who comment on the ongoing action.

## Creative Writing

### ► Writing a Humorous Essay

Write a humorous essay on one of the following topics. In your opening paragraph, introduce yourself to your reader as Thurber does. Conclude your essay with a final anecdote or an observation about your experience.

Living with a family pet

The pleasures of raising and caring for a pet

Getting along with neighborhood pets

The personalities of neighborhood dogs or cats

## About the Author

### James Thurber (1894–1961)



The American satirist James Thurber was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, where he later attended Ohio State University. Most of his sketches, stories, and illustrations first appeared in *The New Yorker* magazine, with which Thurber was closely associated throughout his writing career. Thurber lost the use of one eye as a boy, and by the time of his death he was almost completely blind; yet he continued to write with undiminished humor and vigor.

Thurber is famous not only as a writer but also as a cartoonist. He created a gallery of memorable dogs. His most famous dog was known as "Thurberhound." It had the body and head of a bloodhound and the short legs of a basset. Thurber's essays and cartoons about dogs were collected in the volume *Thurber's Dogs*. In that book Thurber wrote: "The dog has got more fun out of Man than Man has got out of the dog, for the clearly demonstrable reason that Man is the more laughable of the two animals."

### CREATIVE WRITING

Before students begin writing, you may want them to engage in a ten-minute brainstorming session. If some students feel that they cannot be humorous, tell them to write about an everyday experience or their observation of pets. (They may surprise themselves with some humor after all.) The suggested topics should appeal to almost everybody.

A student committee might arrange a bulletin-board display of essays and pictures of pets. Alternatively, this committee might compile a class notebook or "magazine" containing the essays and pictures.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Although a humorist, James Thurber was nevertheless a biting satirist. His writing often poked fun at popular psychology and inspirational literature.

If students have not yet read "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," they might enjoy reading this often-reprinted story. Walter Mitty is a henpecked husband who seeks escape from his dreary life by imagining that he is a heroic adventurer.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the **figures of speech** used in Edwin Way Teale's "The Death of a Tree." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes that Teale is analyzing a process. His simple, conversational **style**, characterized by frequent placement of the topic sentence at the beginning of each paragraph, communicates his ideas clearly and directly. Ask students to focus on the first sentence of each paragraph. Explain that these sentences function as major support statements of the thesis, or central idea, of the essay.

## The Death of a Tree

After students have read the essay, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of Teale's **style**, including his use of **figures of speech**.

1

**Style.** Teale states thesis of essay in first sentence.

2

**Personification.** Author attributes to tree qualities of dignity and nobility.

3

Decayed roots, leaves, and even bits of bark become nutrients for other plants.

4

Here, Teale moves from general characteristics of trees to characteristics of a specific tree—a white oak.

5

**Parallelism.** Teale uses parallel exclamations to emphasize repeated experiences in the life of the tree.

6

Suggests the awe of and curiosity about nature Teale had even as a young child.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activities on p. 238 will give students practice in determining exact meanings of words and recognizing **parallelism** in sentences from the story.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to each think of a favorite tree and freewrite about that tree in their journals, telling its species, describing its appearance, and offering their reasons for choosing it. Then ask students to share their thoughts with the class.

# The Death of a Tree

EDWIN WAY TEALE

*Teale was raised in Joliet, Illinois, but up to the age of sixteen lived most of his summers with his grandparents on their farm in northern Indiana, close to the dunes of Lake Michigan. It is this world that Teale describes in the essay reprinted here. Teale uses an important form of analysis, that of process—here, a natural process rather than an artificial or a historical one.*

*In reading this essay, notice that each paragraph focuses on a single idea and usually states that idea in the opening sentence. At every point in the essay, the reader sees where he or she is going. Yet Teale manages his transitions skillfully: he does not clutter the essay with signposts that detract attention from ideas and details. Teale writes in simple language, in a familiar style that never calls attention to itself. We hear always the voice of the speaking man—of a human being who communicates in writing as he would converse with us, seriously, about what he has observed in his lifetime.*

- 1 For a great tree death comes as a gradual transformation. Its vitality ebbs slowly. Even when life has abandoned it entirely it remains a majestic thing. On some hilltop a dead tree may dominate the landscape for miles around.
- 2 Alone among living things it retains its character and dignity after death. Plants wither; animals disintegrate. But a dead tree may be as arresting, as filled with personality, in death as it is in life. Even in its final moments, when the massive trunk lies prone and it has moldered into a ridge covered with mosses and fungi, it arrives at a fitting and a noble end. It enriches and refreshes the earth. And later, as part of
- 3 other green and growing things, it rises again.
- 4 The death of the great white oak which gave our Indiana homestead its name and which played such an important part in our daily lives was so gentle a transition that we never knew just when it ceased to be a living organism.
- 5 It had stood there, toward the sunset from the farmhouse, rooted in that same spot for two hundred years or more. How many generations of red squirrels had rattled up and down its gray-black bark! How many generations of robins had sung from its upper branches! How many humans, from how many lands, had paused beneath its shade!
- 6 The passing of this venerable giant made a profound impression upon my young mind. Just what caused its death was then a mystery.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 23 / Selection Test 23 / Reading Check 23 / Vocabulary Test 14 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 23



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

One of the most fascinating aspects of Teale's essay is that, while focusing on death, it teems with life. At each stage of the decline of a tree, other organisms thrive in the tree, revealing its death to be a part of a cycle of life.

## PRESENTATION

Edwin Way Teale's interest in nature began in childhood, as suggested in this essay. The essay focuses vividly on the recollections of a boy who, while he certainly did not understand the scientific processes at work as does the mature author

who explains them, obviously observed the phenomenon of the tree's death with a close and loving eye. In the essay, Teale the journalist has organized the information of Teale the scientist carefully, and he reports it clearly, without losing the awe and wonder of a child's view. The result

Looking back, I believe the deep drainage ditches, which had been cut through the dune-country marshes a few years before, had lowered the water table just sufficiently to affect the roots of the old oak. Millions of delicate root tips were injured. As they began to wither, the whole vast underground system of nourishment broke down and the tree was no longer able to send sap to the upper branches.

7 Like a river flowing into a desert, the life stream of the tree dwindled and disappeared before it reached the topmost twigs. They died first. The leaf at the tip of each twig, the last to unfold, was the first to wither and fall. Then, little by little, the twig itself became dead and dry. This process of dissolution, in the manner  
8 of a movie run backward, reversed the development of growth. Just as, cell by cell, the twig had grown outward toward the tip, so now death spread, cell by cell, backward from the tip.

Sadly we watched the blight work from twig to branch, from smaller branch to larger branch, until the whole top of the tree was dead and bare. For years those dry, barkless upper branches remained intact. Their wood  
9 became gray and polished by the winds. When thunderstorms rolled over the farm from the northwest the dead branches shone like silver against the black and swollen sky. Robins and  
10 veeries sang from these lofty perches, gilded by the sunset long after the purple of advancing dusk filled the spaces below.

Then, one by one, their resiliency gone, the topmost limbs crashed to earth, carried away by the fury of stormwinds. In fragments and patches, bark from the upper trunk littered the ground below. The protecting skin of the tree was broken. In through the gaps poured a host of microscopic enemies, the organisms of decay.

Ghostly white fungus penetrated into the

sapwood. It worked its way downward along the unused tubes, those vertical channels through which had flowed the lifeblood of the oak. The continued flow of this sap might have kept out the fungus. But sap rises only to branches clothed with leaves. As each limb became blighted and leafless, the sap level dropped to the next living branch below. And close on the heels of this descending fluid followed the fungus. From branch to branch its silent, deadly descent continued.

Soft and flabby, so unsubstantial it can be crushed without apparent pressure between a thumb and forefinger, this pale fungus is yet able to penetrate through the hardest of woods. This amazing and paradoxical feat is accomplished by means of digestive enzymes which the fungus secretes and which dissolve the wood as strong acids might do. These fungus enzymes, science has learned, are virtually the same as those produced by the single-celled protozoa which live in the bodies of the  
12 termites and enable those insects to digest the cellulose in wood.

13 Advancing in the form of thin white threads, which branch again and again, the fungus works its way from side to side as well as downward through the trunk of a dying tree. Beyond the reach of our eyes the fungus kept spreading within the body of the old oak, branching into a kind of vast, interlacing root system of its own, pale and ghostly.

Behind the fungus, along the dead upper  
14 trunk, yellow hammers drummed on the dry wood. I saw them, with their chisel-bills, hewing out nesting holes which, in turn, admitted new organisms of decay. In effect, the dissolution of a great tree is like the slow turning of an  
15 immense wheel of life. Each stage of its decline and decay brings a whole new, interdependent population of dwellers and their parasites.

Even while the lower branches of the oak were still green, insect wreckers were already

7

**Simile.** Effective comparison that suggests tree is unable to provide adequate nourishment to its top branches.

8

**What is like "a movie run backward"?** Dying of tree from tips of branches downward—a process opposite that of growth.

9

**Imagery.** Striking visual images: silver branches against black sky, gilded branches above purple of dusk.

10

**Veeries:** tawny thrushes, known for liquid quality of their song.

11

**What damage was done by the white fungus?** It penetrated into the sapwood, followed vertical channels downward, and dissolved the wood.

12

Fungus and termites are able to destroy wood because of digestive enzymes.

13

**Style.** Teale uses much simpler language than he might use if addressing a botanist. His purpose is to interest and inform the lay reader.

14

**Yellow hammer:** North American woodpecker; uses strong beak to chisel nesting holes.

15

Invaders contribute to tree's death; tree's death sustains their life.

is that readers feel the majesty of the tree and see its death almost as if they are there.

Blessed with the right season, weather, location, and administrative sanction, you and your class might discuss this lesson while sitting under a large and beautiful tree. If such a setting is not

possible, then display a few pictures of majestic trees and inviting forest paths. Remind students of their previous comments about favorite trees, and ask them to help you visualize Teale's white oak.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

This photograph of a leafless tree against a brilliant sunset highlights the tree's structure. However, as Teale's description of the dying oak shows, often detailed information about the natural world can only be gleaned from hours, even years, of study. As an out-of-class project, have students study an object of nature for at least an hour. Tell them that they should take a notebook to record details to include in a written report on the observation.

16

*Thousand-leggers*: insect family of *Myriapoda*, which includes millipedes and centipedes.

17

Hurricane intensity may include winds of at least sixty miles per hour.

18

Such a white oak in rich soil might grow as tall as 100 feet.

19

**Imagery.** Tree now has wintry appearance, even in summer; the sights and sounds of summer greenery are missed.



at work above them. First to arrive were the bark beetles. In the earliest stages their fare was the tender inner layer of the bark, the living bond between the trunk and its covering. As death spread downward in the oak, as freezing and storms loosened the bark, the beetles descended, foot by foot. Some of them left behind elaborate patterns, branching mazes of tunnels that took on the appearance of fantastic "thousand-leggers" engraved on wood.

During the winter when I was twelve years old a gale of abnormal force swept the Great

Lakes region. Gusts reached almost hurricane proportions. Weakened by the work of the fungus, bacteria, woodpeckers, and beetles, the whole top of the tree snapped off some seventy feet from the ground. After that the progress of its dissolution was rapid.

Finally the last of the lower leaves disappeared. The green badge of life returned no more. On summer days the sound of the wind sweeping through the old oak had a winter shrillness. No more was there the rustling of a multitude of leaves above our hammock; no more was there the "plump!" of falling acorns.

Leaves and acorns, life and progress, were at an end.

20 In the days that followed, as the bark loosened to the base, the wheel of life, which had 25 its hub in the now-dead oak, grew larger.

I saw carpenter ants hurrying this way and 21 that over the lower tree trunk. Ichneumon flies, trailing deadily, drill-like ovipositors,<sup>1</sup> hovered above the bark in search of buried larvae on which to lay their eggs. Carpenter bees, their black abdomens glistening like patent leather, bit their way into the dry wood of the dead branches. Click beetles and sow bugs and small spiders found security beneath fragments of the loosened bark. And around the base of the tree swift-legged carabid beetles hunted their insect prey under cover of darkness.

Yellowish-brown, the wood flour of the powder-post beetles began to sift about the foot of the oak. It, in turn, attracted the larvae 22 of the darkling beetles. Thus, link by link, the chain of life expanded. To the expert eye the condition of the wood, the bark, the ground about the base of the oak—all told of the action of the interrelated forms of life attracted by the death and decay of a tree.

23 But below all this activity, beyond the power of human sight to detect, other changes were taking place. The underground root system, comprising almost as much wood as was visible in the tree rising above ground, was also altering.

24 Fungus, entering the damaged root tips or working downward from the infected trunk, followed the sap channels and hastened decay. The great main roots, spreading out as far as the widest branches of the tree itself, altered rapidly. Their fibers grew brittle; their old pliancy disappeared; their bark split and loosened. The breakdown of the upper tree found

its counterpart, within the darkness of the earth, in the dissolution of the lower roots.

I remember well the day the great oak came down. I was fourteen at the time. Gramp had measured distances and planned his cutting operations in advance. He chopped away for fully half an hour before he had a V-shaped bite cut exactly in position to bring the trunk crashing in the place desired. Hours filled with the whine of the crosscut saw followed.

Then came the great moment. A few last, quick strokes. A slow, deliberate swaying. The crack of parting fibers. Then a long “swoo-sh!” that rose in pitch as the towering trunk arced downward at increasing speed. There followed a vast tumult of crashing, crackling sound; the dance of splintered branches; a haze of dead, swirling grass. Then a slow settling of small objects and silence. All was over. Lone oak was gone.

Gram, I remember, brushed away what she remarked was dust in her eyes with a corner of her apron and went inside. She had known and loved that one great tree since she had come to the farm as a bride of sixteen. She had seen it under all conditions and through eyes colored by many moods. Her children had grown up under its shadow and I, a grandchild, had known its shade. Its passing was like the passing of an old, old friend. For all of us there seemed an empty space in our sky in the days that followed.

Gramp and I set to work, attacking the fallen giant. Great piles of cordwood, mounds of broken branches for kindling, grew around the prostrate trunk as the weeks went by. Eventually only the huge, circular table of the low stump remained—reddish-brown and slowly dissolving into dust.

For two winters wood from the old oak fed the kitchen range and the dining-room stove. It had a clean, well-seasoned smell. And it burned with a clear and leaping flame,

20

**Metaphor.** Again, Teale uses “wheel of life” to remind reader that all living things go through a cycle of germinating, growing, maturing, dying, and decaying. The wheel grows larger because so many life forms feed on the decay.

21

Ichneumon flies lay eggs in larvae of other insects; ovipositors are their organs for depositing eggs. When eggs hatch, the larvae are parasitic in bodies of host insects.

22

**Metaphor.** The insects each play essential roles in an interdependent society of organisms.

23

**Style.** Teale leads readers smoothly from one phase of his subject to another with simple transitions.

24

**What is the final stage in the death of the tree?** Spreading of fungus through underground root system and dissolution of roots.

25

Gramp planned the cutting carefully because he wanted the tree to fall in a certain place, minimizing damage.

26

Use to answer study question 4a, p. 238.

1. **Ichneumon** (ik-nōō'mən); **ovipositor** (ō'və-pōz'ə-tər).



27

Teale restates thesis; even burning wood reflects the oak's dignity.

### READING CHECK

1. Lowered water table injured root tips (p. 235).
2. Leaves at tips of twigs died (p. 235).
3. Bark (p. 235).
4. Fungus, bacteria, woodpeckers, beetles, ants, and bees (pp. 235–237).
5. Broke top branches (p. 236).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Does not die quickly and disintegrate like animals and other plants. 1b. Still dominates landscape and keeps impressive character even in death.
- 2a. Teale tells of decay's progression. Each invader prepares way for the next. 2b. Living things are born, grow, die, decay, and make way for and nourish other living things.
3. First stage was blight, dying back, and invasion by microscopic organisms; second stage was spread of fungus and attacks by birds and insects; third stage was spreading of fungus through underground root system and dissolution of roots.
- 4a. Tells how family had enjoyed its shade. Gramp carefully plans cutting tree; Gram mourns the tree. 4b. "Like the old tree itself, the fibers of these sticks had character and endurance to the very end."

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Describes living tree as having character, dignity, and nobility.
2. **Simile:** "Like a river flowing into a desert, the life stream of the tree dwindled and disappeared. . . ." **Personification:** "The protecting skin of the tree was broken." **Metaphor:** "The green badge of life returned no more."

continuing—unlike the quickly consumed poplar and elm—for an admirable length of time.

- 27 Like the old tree itself, the fibers of these sticks had character and endurance to the very end.

### Reading Check

1. What was responsible for the death of the oak tree?
2. What was the first outward sign that the tree was dying?
3. What part of the tree is compared to a protective skin?
4. What microscopic organisms and other wreckers attacked the tree?
5. What kind of damage was done by winds?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Essay

1. Teale states his central idea, or **thesis**, in his opening paragraph. Death comes to the tree as a "gradual transformation." **a.** How does this transformation make the death of the tree different from the death of plants and animals? **b.** What point is Teale making about the tree in the whole paragraph?
- 2a. How do the details of the description illustrate the point that "Each stage of its decline and decay brings a whole new, interdependent population of dwellers and their parasites"? **b.** How does this process of dissolution explain the phrase, "the slow turning of an immense wheel of life"?
3. What are the three main stages in the death of the tree, and how does Teale keep them in focus for the reader?

### CLOSURE

Ask students to select an example of **metaphor**, **simile**, and **personification** from "The Death of a Tree" and explain the comparison that each one suggests.

- 4a. How do the details of the final paragraphs relate the tree to the human world? **b.** How does Teale restate his thesis in the final paragraph?

### Literary Elements

#### Figures of Speech

- In discussing the possible cause of the tree's death, and the beginning of the process, Teale uses metaphor and simile. The tree is metaphorically a "venerable giant," as if it possessed human qualities. This particular kind of metaphor is called **personification**. How are these qualities suggested in the details of the living tree? What comparisons or similes does Teale use to make the process of dying concrete?

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Determining Exact Meanings

- 1 Use your dictionary to determine the exact meaning of each of the following words:

blight	dissolution	molder
disintegrate	dwindle	wither

Write sentences of your own, using each word to show its exact meaning.

#### Recognizing Parallelism

Teale occasionally arranges sentences in parallel order to stress the similarity in ideas:

How many generations of robins had sung from its upper branches!

How many humans, from how many lands, had paused beneath its shade!

- Phrases and clauses within a sentence can be balanced in the same way: "How many humans, from how many lands." Find examples of other phrases or clauses balanced in the same way.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Trees play host to other life forms not only during their decay but also in life. Have students choose a tree and observe it closely, describing the results of their observation in an essay. Encourage them to be as specific as Teale.

Teale details the death of a tree. Students might visit a local nursery or arboretum to learn more about the life of a tree and then write a report on how to choose a tree appropriate for their area, how to plant it, and how to nurture it. Have students talk with garden club members,

nursery workers, and local agricultural extension agents on the subject of trees that have been damaged by lightning, insect invasion, or blight and prepare oral reports about their findings.

## Expository Writing

### ► Describing a Process

Describe a process you have performed many times—for example, repairing a bicycle tire or boning a fish. Write to an audience that has never performed this process and therefore needs to be informed about the tools needed and the details of each step in the process.

### ► Writing an Outline of the Essay

Teale's essay has three main parts, corresponding to the stages in the death of the tree. The opening and concluding paragraphs provide an introduction and a final comment on these stages. Write an outline of the essay, making the first part (I) correspond to the first stage of the dying process. Present the opening paragraph as a thesis statement introducing the outline.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on p. 289.

## About the Author

Edwin Way Teale (1899–1980)



Edwin Way Teale, one of America's foremost authors of nature books, was born on a farm in the Midwest. He began his career as a naturalist by recording his observations of insects. After graduating from Columbia University, he worked as a teacher, a writer, and an editor for *Popular Science*. In his writing Teale introduced his readers to the subtle beauties of nature. *The American Seasons*, his major work, consists of four volumes: *North with the Spring*, *Journey into Summer*, *Autumn Across America*, and *Wandering Through Winter*. The last of these volumes was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1966.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

### Determining Exact Meanings

1. **Blight**: disease that prevents growth and causes discoloration and withering.

**Disintegrate**: break up.

**Dissolution**: decomposition.

**Dwindle**: diminish, shrink.

**Molder**: crumble into dust.

**Wither**: dry up, shrivel.

### Recognizing Parallelism

1. "Just as, cell by cell, the twig had grown outward toward the tip, so now death spread, cell by cell, backward from the top" (p. 235).

"Leaves and acorns, life and progress, were at an end" (p. 237).

"Their fibers grew brittle; their old pliancy disappeared; their bark split and loosened" (p. 237).

"No more was there the rustling of a multitude of leaves about our hammock; no more was there the 'plump!' of falling acorns" (p. 236).

## EXPOSITORY WRITING

### Describing a Process

Emphasize to students that they should choose a process they understand thoroughly.

### Writing an Outline of the Essay

First, have students identify the three main parts of the essay. Explain that these will be the major headings of the outline. Next, encourage students to decide which ideas will serve as subheadings that will support each major heading.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In addition to being a writer, Teale was a talented nature photographer. He took over 20,000 photographs in his lifetime, some of which were displayed in the Royal Photographic Society salon, London.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the message of *Silent Spring* as revealed in Norman's essay "The Flight of Rachel Carson." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote prepares the reader for Norman's defense of Rachel Carson's views on environmental issues. Ask students what means of **persuasion** Norman might use to convince us to agree with him.

## The Flight of Rachel Carson

After students have read the essay, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding students to an understanding of Carson's message.

**1** Year of Norman's observation is approximately 1960.

**2** **Osprey:** large, fish-eating bird found in most parts of world; also called fish-hawk.

**3** As America's national symbol, bald eagle represents courage, dignity, strength, and freedom; classified as an endangered species.

**4** **Persuasion.** Words such as "abandoned," "untended," "crumbled," and "forlorn" appeal to emotions.

**5** Pelicans are large fish-eating birds that store their catch in deep, expandable pouches.

**6** Norman refers to the Gulf coast of Florida and Alabama, where he grew up.

**7** **What does this description of the pelicans reveal about the author?** His close observation and appreciation of birds.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 248 will give students practice in learning words from their Latin origins.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Initiate a discussion of an action recently taken in your local area or state relating to an environmental issue (chemical waste, water or air pollution, etc.). Encourage students to discuss pros and cons of the action.

# The Flight of Rachel Carson

GEOFFREY NORMAN

*In this essay, Geoffrey Norman focuses on the events leading up to and following the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, a book that gave impetus to the environmental movement. Norman's purpose is not simply to report the facts but to persuade the reader that Carson's work was a monumental achievement. As you read, consider the relationship of Norman's introduction and conclusion to the body of the essay and to his thesis.*

You did not have to be a bird watcher to notice, **1** fifteen years after the end of the Second World War, that something was wrong. Many species were not reappearing in the spring in numbers as large as usual. Some of the larger, most majestic birds seemed on the verge of vanishing altogether. I can remember seeing fewer and **2** fewer ospreys in the places where I had always seen them before and thinking that they were suffering from the same complaint that had **3** eliminated the bald eagle from the rivers and bays and bayous that I prowled. We all knew that eagles did not like to share territory, not with other birds and especially not with man. So I assumed the same was true of the osprey, a raptor like the eagle, colored very much like him, but smaller and more abundant. But they **4** were gone one year. Osprey nests that had been used, spring after spring, sat abandoned in the tall, dead pine trees. Eventually the

untended nests crumbled until there were only a few forlorn twigs where they had been.

**5** The absence of the pelicans was even more **6** conspicuous and baffling. All along the coasts of the Gulf and the southern Atlantic, pelicans had been so abundant you felt they were everywhere. If you looked out across a stretch of water and saw a piling without a pelican perched on it, the vista was somehow incomplete. If you sat on a beach for twenty minutes, **7** you would be sure to see a formation of pelicans fly by, pumping their wings in unison, then gliding for a few improbable beats. They looked too heavy for that, and you would never call them graceful. But they were able fliers and very determined, slightly comic and irresistible if you cared about birds.

Not everybody does, of course. And there is nothing wrong with that. But many people who do care about birds care intensely. They

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 24 / Selection Test 24 / Reading Check 24 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 24



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Geoffrey Norman's personal observations frame a discussion of the circumstances surrounding the publication of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*, which introduced the concept of ecology to the public and precipitated the environmental

movement. In this essay, Norman deals with Carson's insights into the causes of environmental problems and with the controversy which the book generated.

## PRESENTATION

*Silent Spring* was published years before your ninth-graders were born; consequently, they have lived in the environmentally conscious world Norman depicts. They may take for granted the almost weekly mention in the media



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The osprey was one of many species adversely affected by DDT. Elevated levels of DDT in the birds' bodies caused their eggshells to thin to the point that they could not support the weight of an incubating mother. Since the banning of DDT, osprey numbers have increased.

8

Audubon was born in Haiti. He came to America in 1803 and began intensive observation of birds that resulted in his famous book, *The Birds of America*.

9

Transitional sentence intimates that even those who are not lovers of birds should be concerned.

10

**Persuasion.** Norman begins his argument by showing that Carson, while not an expert on pesticides, did have the necessary background to do research on the subject.

11

**What does Carson's attention to her correspondents reveal?** Her concern for people and environmental questions.

12

*Silent Spring* was published in 1962.

13

Conservationist movement began in the early 1900s to establish state and national parks and conserve natural resources, but it was not until after World War II that laws were passed to limit environmental pollution and the use of dangerous chemicals.

14

Vivid example that helps to explain Carson's call for environmental control.

8 care almost as much as John James Audubon<sup>1</sup> cared. Something in the flight and song and color of birds serves for them as a window onto all the wonders and beauty of this world. Such  
9 a person was Rachel Carson. And she wrote the book that explained what was killing the  
12 birds and why we might be next.

It was the late Fifties when she first took an interest in the slow disappearance and, in some  
13 cases, massive die-offs of birds. She was then a  
14 best-selling author of a trilogy about the sea, *The Sea Around Us*, *Under the Sea-Wind*, and *The Edge of the Sea*. Her books were serialized by *The New Yorker* and had earned her a vast following and many correspondents, all of whom  
11 she was careful to answer. One of them wrote

1. **John James Audubon:** an American naturalist and ornithologist (1785–1851), known for his paintings of North American birds. The Audubon Society, a conservation organization, is named for him.

to ask for her help in stopping the spraying over a private bird sanctuary near Cape Cod. Carson made some inquiries, and as she learned more she became more alarmed. That was the beginning of a labor that was to result in her book *Silent Spring*, which led to action that saved the birds and energized millions to work and campaign and vote for an enduring cause that, for lack of a better name, is called “the environmental movement.”

When the book was published, it was an ordinary occurrence for an airplane to fly over a community, trailing a heavy fog that settled slowly to earth and then disappeared like smoke. The fog contained poisons that had been developed during war research and were meant to kill mosquitoes, Japanese beetles, gypsy moths, and other insects lumped together under the category “pests.” The poisons were, technically, chlorinated hydrocarbons. The most common was called DDT.

of environmental issues. That we now have regulatory groups is beneficial, but it can also create a tendency in people to relax and be lulled into a comfortable feeling of security, believing that someone else is handling the environmental problems. Encourage students to discuss their

own feelings about the environment. Do they think the environment is safe? in danger? Do they think they have the power to do anything about it? You may point out that although poisons such as DDT are now banned, the safety of many still being used is seriously questioned.

Remind them that the burden of proof always lies with the public. In every case where a poison has been outlawed, it was because someone became concerned and began to alert others.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In nature's food chain, the effect of chemicals, a silent killer, moves from one species to another. Humans' attempts to control harmful insects and animals often result in the killing of birds. For example, the brown pelican that continually feeds on contaminated fish eventually dies.

15

People were ignorant of the dangers of the chemicals to the environment—effects were subtle and noticed only by keen observers of nature.

16

**How did all these different groups profit from spraying?**

Universities helped develop chemicals; chemical companies sold them; farmers, packagers, and grocers suffered less loss from insects.

17

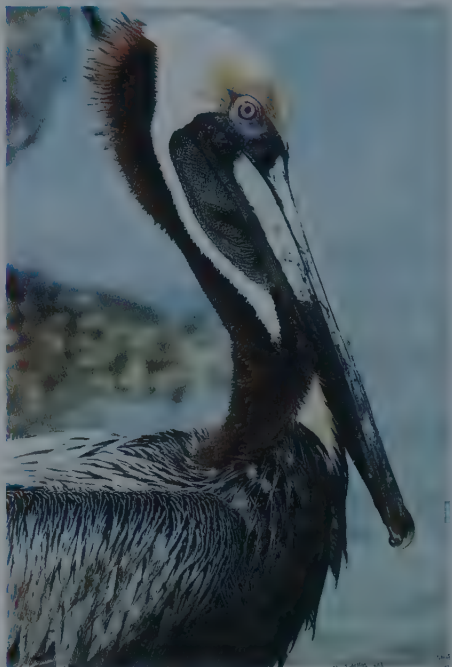
**Tone.** Author's cynical attitude is revealed in his discussion of those who profited from pesticides and those who sought to "control" nature.

18

Since the early 1960s, well-publicized cases of environmental pollution have aroused people's concern and have served as benchmarks, standards for measuring later cases.

19

**Parallelism.** Author's use of parallel structure underscores his critical attitude toward the many people who believed that pesticides would kill only the intended victims.



The spraying was done in the name of public health.

And it was done enthusiastically, almost messianically.<sup>2</sup> Tourist communities boasted of the number of tons of DDT sprayed over them each year to keep them "insect-free." In their advertising, chemical companies came close to suggesting that their efforts were the last line of defense against famine and plague. The spraying had the uncritical support of the government, especially the Department of Agriculture. Pesticide spraying was public policy from the local courthouse all the way to Washington, D.C. It was profitable, too, for the chemical companies, universities, food packagers, grocery chains, and farmers. But

the stakes went beyond profit. People in the pesticide programs *believed* in what they were doing. Their faith was of the same order as the faith of physicists who wanted to split the atom—back before there ever was a bomb. The physicists believed that man was destined first to understand and then to control the universe. The sprayers were more modest. They believed that man was meant to control nature. They did not believe it was necessary, however, to understand it first.

But theirs was a real faith, and it did not react kindly when challenged. Twenty-one years after the publication of *Silent Spring*, against a background of Love Canal,<sup>3</sup> routine alarms over contaminated drinking water, and a scandal at the Environmental Protection Agency, which did not even exist then . . . with those benchmarks to go by, it seems extraordinary today that scientists and intelligent laymen could believe that there was nothing dangerous about dumping tons of poisons on the earth to kill bugs. That the bugs would co-operatively die (rather than build resistance to the poisons) and that nothing else would be harmed. That we could, through chemistry, create an insect-free Eden. But that is exactly what people believed.

Shortly after she had begun her research into the effects of spraying, Rachel Carson was asked to testify at an upcoming trial. A group in Long Island was trying to stop spraying against gypsy moths—spraying that had also killed birds and fish and at least one horse. The group had filed for an injunction<sup>4</sup> and would be getting a hearing. Her testimony could be helpful. She was immediately sympathetic and began researching in preparation.

3. **Love Canal:** a hazardous waste site in Niagara Falls, New York.

4. **injunction:** a court order prohibiting someone or some group from doing something.



All her life she had loved birds. She was an Audubon member and, in the days before she became a best-selling author, when she was an  
20 anonymous Washington bureaucrat, Audubon outings had been perhaps her greatest source of pleasure. There never was much of it. She'd had to work hard to support her family—mother, father, sisters, and, when one of her sisters died, the small, orphaned children.  
21 Though she never married—a fact that her detractors turned into a slur—she supported dependents all of her life, much of the time on a small government salary.

So the outings and the birds must have  
22 meant a great deal to her. She loved nature, and had from the time she was a small, solitary girl growing up in Pennsylvania farm country. But more than a lover of birds, she was a scientist. She wrote out of her training. She had read the technical papers about the spraying that questioned both the effectiveness and the safety of the chemicals. She was concerned.

23 But in the end she was unable to testify at the Long Island trial. She was seriously ill. But she was convinced that the trial was important and could be made to stand for the question of pesticide use worldwide. Somebody, she thought, should attend the trial and write about it. She could not do it herself; she had other projects in mind, among them a book on evolution, and there was the matter of her health. Also, she probably knew that any book she wrote on the subject would become, necessarily, a book on the environment and therefore a large undertaking. An ordeal.

So she wrote E. B. White, whom she knew through *The New Yorker*. He was a writer who cared about the natural world and had the gifts to turn coverage of the trial into something larger than itself. He decided not to write the story but agreed it was important and that  
24 somebody should. He urged her to write it. She finally agreed, almost as though she had



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Rachel Carson, a close observer of nature, opened the eyes of others through her relentless campaign to stop the killing of birds and other animals caused by spraying dangerous chemicals. Now others have assumed the responsibility to protect the natural world from technology.

20

Carson worked for the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries and its successor, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

21

Such stigmatizing of unmarried women is changing with new ideas about the roles of women.

22

**Tone.** Author conveys his respect and admiration for Carson.

23

**Style.** This sentence begins a paragraph that is typical of Norman's conversational style of writing, which is characterized by terse sentence structure, use of familiar vocabulary, and occasional fragments.

24

White contrasts two types of individuals in his essay "Security" (p. 218) and would no doubt classify Carson as one of the "airborne freemen."



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to report from first-hand observation or from research on the habits of a bird species. Some students might be familiar with the successes of the organized effort across the country to increase bluebird populations by building breeding houses for the birds.

25

Carson's heroism is reflected in dogged persistence in writing the book even though she was in physical pain.

26

Indicates Carson's devotion to and belief in the importance of the project.

27

Carson anticipated and rebutted the arguments of her opponents.

28

Carson's technique of obtaining and using authoritative information reflects her skill as a writer.

29

**Why would Carson be so concerned about her writing style?** Carson's careful revision shows her belief that her writing style would enhance her message.

30

Norman's reference to Darwin suggests that Carson's *Silent Spring* had an impact on society similar to that of Darwin's *Origin of Species*.



known all along that she would. But she did not cover the trial, which, as it developed, 27 failed to stop the spraying on Long Island. Instead she started at the very beginning.

The research and writing took four years. 28 During that time she was seriously ill. She had arthritis, developed an ulcer, and came down with staph<sup>5</sup> infections so severe that she could 29 not walk. Her mother was also in poor health. Her niece died and left a very young boy, whom she adopted. Then her mother died. Finally, she was told she had cancer.

26 The misfortunes did not stop her. Neither did they rush her. Rather, they seemed to 30

deepen her resolve to write the book and make it impregnable. She knew it would be attacked. She wrote letters to her editor, explaining her intentions, and she continued to work.

28 Her methods were simple enough. She read the available documents and corresponded with experts. Then, she went through several drafts, revising until she was satisfied with the flow of the prose.

The book that her efforts resulted in was about the spraying and what it did to the birds and other creatures. But that does not begin to describe its scope or account for its impact. One might just as well say that Darwin<sup>6</sup> wrote

5. **staph:** a short form of *Staphylococcus*, a kind of bacteria.

6. **Darwin:** Charles Darwin (1809–1892), a naturalist who originated the theory that life forms evolve by a process of natural selection.

about turtles and the Pacific islands where they were found.

**31** What Carson did in *Silent Spring* was to introduce to the general imagination the concept of ecology: the way the natural world fit together, the pieces so tightly and inextricably bound that you could not isolate cause and effect. The consequences of any action rippled through the whole system, affecting everything and sometimes even changing the system itself. So when we poisoned gypsy moths with massive sprayings of DDT, we were, ultimately, poisoning ourselves.

**34** The book opened with a parable that described a landscape from which the birds and fish had vanished and where people died of mysterious ailments. It is, on rereading, the weakest portion of the book. But you can understand why it was necessary when you recall that in 1962 people needed to be shocked. They thought pesticides were safe, if they thought about them at all.

From that first chapter, she went on to explain that life on the planet had been changing for millions of years, that such change was slow and organic and inevitable. But now there was something different, a new force at work. Man had made it possible to alter the environment suddenly and drastically, with unforeseen and possibly disastrous consequences.

After sounding the alarm and stating her thesis in the first two chapters, she described the poisons that we were encountering—DDT was showing up even in the fatty tissues of Eskimo who lived in areas where the stuff had never been sprayed. She used diagrams to show the molecular structure of the chlorinated hydrocarbons and made the distinctions between these new poisons and the older ones.

The book went on to detail the effects of these poisons on the environment. Not surprisingly, the most affecting chapter was on

the birds. The book's title was inspired by some lines in Keats<sup>7</sup> and an imagined spring when no birds returned.

There was information—data on every page. There was nothing half-baked or mystical about the book. More than fifty pages of sources were cited. But the science and information came filtered through her intelligence and shaped by her graceful writing style. On almost every page there was a gem that owed more to her vision than the research of any laboratory scientist. The best passages are, in fact, lyrical.

**35** Some 10,000 acres of sagelands were sprayed by the [United States Forest] Service, yielding to pressure of cattlemen for more grasslands. The sage was killed, as intended. But so was the green, life-giving ribbon of willows that traced its way across these plains, following the meandering streams.

**36** Moose had lived in these willow thickets, for willow is to the moose what sage is to the antelope. Beaver had lived there, too, feeding on the willows, felling them and making a strong dam across the tiny stream. Through the labor of the beavers, a lake backed up. Trout in the mountain streams seldom were more than six inches long; in the lake they thrived so prodigiously that many grew to five pounds. Waterfowl were attracted to the lake, also. Merely because of the presence of the willows and the beavers that depended on them, the region was an attractive recreational area with excellent fishing and hunting.

**37** But with the "improvement" instituted by the Forest Service, the willows went the way of the sagebrush, killed by the same impar-

7. Keats: John Keats (1795–1821), an English poet. The lines are from "La Belle Dame sans Merci":

The sedge has withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

**31**

Use to answer study question 1a, p. 248.

**32**

Here Norman states Carson's thesis—that the natural world is bound together and anything that affects one part affects the whole.

**33**

Irony. Example suggests people cannot change part of environment without feeling the effect themselves.

**34**

What purpose might be served by this "shocking" introduction to the book? The "hook," which brings the subject to a personal level, might entice the reader to read more.

**35**

Carson's prose is so vividly descriptive that her own personal involvement cannot be doubted, and it causes readers to become emotionally involved with this dying area.

**36**

Carson provides details to support her claim that the destroyed willows were "life-giving."

**37**

Carson uses "improvement" ironically; spraying caused terrible disaster.

38

**Allusion.** Book published less than a decade after what is known as the "McCarthy era," when Senator Joseph McCarthy accused many citizens and government officials of being communists. Norman's reference emphasizes controversy of Carson's book.

39

Lawyer's use of "east-curtain parity" is meant to suggest that eliminating pesticides will reduce American food supplies to level of scarcity found in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

40

**What does the lawyer imply by stating that "sinister parties" control "many innocent groups"?** That communists are actually behind efforts to control pesticides.

41

**Irony.** Commercial influences (represented by lawyer's client) rather than political influences (as insinuated by lawyer) proved to be greatest threat to environment and, thereby, to people.

42

Other men and women of science, however, acclaimed Carson's work; Carson names and thanks many doctors and scientists for their expert help with her research and writing.

tial spray. . . . The moose were gone and so were the beaver. Their principal dam had gone out for want of attention by its skilled architects, and the lake had drained away. None of the large trout were left. None could live in the tiny creek that remained, threading its way through a bare, hot land where no shade remained. The living world was shattered. . . .

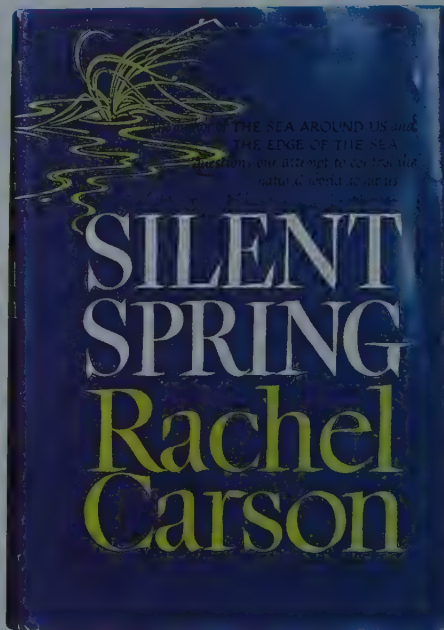
As she expected, the book was attacked almost as soon as it was serialized in *The New Yorker*. One chemical firm that was not mentioned by name (though its products were) found a lawyer on the staff who was willing to threaten a lawsuit if her publishers actually brought the

38 book out. He was also not above a little Red-baiting.<sup>8</sup> Members of the chemical industry, he wrote in his letter to Houghton Mifflin, had enough trouble with the food faddists already. Now here was a book that would ". . . reduce the use of agricultural chemicals in this country and in the countries of western Europe, so

39 that our supply of food will be reduced to east-  
40 curtain parity. Many innocent groups are  
41 financed and led into attacks on the chemical  
42 industry by these sinister parties." It was later  
discovered that the lawyer's client was dumping highly toxic chemicals into the Mississippi River. The poisons caused massive fish kills.

Other chemical company spokesmen and officials in the spraying programs worked tirelessly to discredit the book. They attacked it as offering the bad side of an either-or choice, which it did not; Carson said that pesticides had their uses but were dangerous and that we needed to use them with caution. But the forces attacking the book ignored distinctions she was careful to make. She would have us choose birds over people, they said. Her point was that when you kill the birds you are also

8. **Red-baiting:** denouncing someone as a communist.



slowly killing people. M.D.s and heads of university departments of agriculture and presidents of chemical companies attacked the book or merely satisfied themselves with a little ad hominem:<sup>9</sup> ". . . not a scientist," one of them said, "but rather a fanatic defender of the cult of the balance of nature." Another cited her "disregard of the rubrics<sup>10</sup> of evidence, of a nice regard for scientific validity, or any feeling that what she presented should be unbiased." And so on, until it became quite clear that men of science were no more dispassionate now than in the time of Darwin.

Through it all, she kept her silence, letting the book speak for itself. And it held its own

9. **ad hominem** (ăd hōm'ī-nēm): a Latin phrase used to describe an argument which appeals to prejudice or emotions rather than to reason.

10. **rubrics** (rōō'briks): established rules or directions.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify the thesis of Carson's book *Silent Spring* as stated by Geoffrey Norman and tell the most important results of the book. Then ask them to identify the purpose of "The Flight of Rachel Carson."

very nicely. It was a best seller for almost a year. Translated all over the world. It was the subject of countless stories and editorials in the newspapers, was reviewed favorably and accepted by millions. . . .

Rachel Carson did not live to see DDT banned or to follow the successes and setbacks of the movement her book launched. She died two years after it was published, at her home in Silver Spring, Maryland. She had testified before Congress and appeared on television and been honored widely. She accepted it all with grace and good humor. (Tiring, perhaps, of the nature-loving-food-faddist charges, she once answered the question "Miss Carson, what do you eat?" by saying, "Chlorinated hydrocarbons, just like everyone else.") She left some of

**43** her money to the Sierra Club and The Nature Conservancy, and there is a vast wildlife preserve named for her in Maine. A small organization run by a friend continues her work and answers the occasional letter that still comes in addressed to Rachel Carson, usually from someone who has just read the book.

The fight to save the earth from our own destructive excesses will never end. Or, if it does,

**44** it will end badly. But since *Silent Spring*, the pelicans and the ospreys have returned. In the morning before I wrote these words, my daughter and I watched from our porch as a pair of ospreys flew along the beach, hunting fish. We admired them together, their graceful, purposeful flight and their heart-catching dives when they spotted prey. They flew on, returning no doubt to their nests and their young, with small fish impaled on their talons. Several large flocks of pelicans also came by, flying in echelon,<sup>11</sup> low to the water, on their way to a rookery. We watched with shared awe, and I recalled some lines Rachel Carson had

written a year or two before she began work on *Silent Spring*. Her subject was encouraging awareness in children, and it could serve as a coda:<sup>12</sup>

A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood. If I had influence with the good fairy who is supposed to preside over the christening of all children I should ask that her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantments of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the sources of our strength.

**45** That sense of wonder never left Rachel Carson. It was her own source of strength and her legacy.

12. **coda** (kō'də): a concluding passage, usually in music.

## Reading Check

1. According to Norman, which birds appeared to be vanishing in the late 1950s?
2. Before Rachel Carson began her research into the effects of spraying pesticides, what had been the subject of her published works?
3. How did Carson become involved in research on pesticides?
4. Who were the most vigorous opponents of Carson's book?
5. What were her methods of research?

**43**

Consistent with her "cause" in life, she intended proceeds from her book to continue to help save environment from wanton destruction.

**44**

Artistic unity in Norman's essay is illustrated in his return to his first subject, coastal birds of prey.

**45**

Norman's use of Carson's quotation sets up his final tribute to her.

## READING CHECK

1. Osprey and pelican (p. 240).
2. The sea (p. 241).
3. Was asked to help stop spraying over a private bird sanctuary near Cape Cod (p. 241).
4. Members of chemical industry (p. 246).
5. Read available documents and corresponded with experts (p. 244).

11. **echelon** (ēsh'ə-lōn): in steplike formation.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Recommending aids such as the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, have students choose one particular environmental issue—acid rain, water pollution, air pollution, or a specific endangered species, past or present, such as the

whooping crane—and write a report on it. This activity might work well as a group assignment.

Have the class create a questionnaire about attitudes toward environmental issues and then use it to poll residents in the community. The

results of the poll could be made into a chart and used for classroom discussion. Students might also interest a local newspaper in their activity.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Introduced concept of ecology to ordinary people and gave impetus to the environmental movement. 1b. Natural world is bound together and anything that affects one part affects the whole.

2a. Shows meticulous attention to detail and knowledge of subject. 2b. Prose is vividly descriptive. 2c. Intense belief in beauty and wonder of world.

3a. Carson began her study with plight of birds; Norman uses birds to illustrate accuracy of her observations. 3b. Disappearance and return of ospreys and pelicans provide specific example of need for and result of Carson's book.

4a. Ability of Rachel Carson to see problem of environment—to soar over earthbound objections of "experts." 4b. *Flight* also refers to birds, the central image of the essay.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Pestiferous**: producing or spreading infectious disease, from Latin *pestis*, meaning "plague."

**Pestilence**: a usually fatal epidemic, from *pestis*.

**Pestilential**: tending to cause infection and death, from *pestis*.

2. **Decide**: killing of a god, from Latin *deus*, meaning "god," and *-cida*, meaning "kill."

**Fungicide**: substance that kills fungi, from Latin *fungosus*, meaning "fungus," and *-cida*.

**Regicide**: killing of a king, from Latin *reg-*, meaning "king," and *-cida*.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Essay

1a. According to Norman, what was the most important consequence of *Silent Spring*?

b. Briefly restate Carson's thesis.

2. Norman includes two passages written by Carson. a. What does the first passage (page 245) reveal about Carson's methods as a researcher? b. In what way does the word *lyrical* apply to this passage? c. What do both passages reveal about Carson as a person?

3. The body of this essay is framed by an introduction and a conclusion, in which Norman speaks about his personal observations of birds. a. What connection is there between these sections and the main body of the essay? b. How do these sections drive home Norman's thesis—that Rachel Carson's book created awareness of the complex relationships between living organisms and their environment?

4a. What do you think the title refers to?

b. Why is the word *flight* an appropriate word for this essay?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Learning Words from the Latin

The word *pesticide* is made up of the word *pest*, which goes back to a Latin word for "plague," and the suffix *-cide*, which comes from a Latin verb meaning "to kill." Etymologically, the word *pesticide* means "plague killer." We now use it to refer to any chemical that kills such "pests" as rodents, insects, or weeds.

1 Find these words in a dictionary and tell how they are related to the meaning of *pest*:

pestiferous      pestilence      pestilential

The suffix *-cide* appears in many English words. Find these words in a dictionary and tell what they mean:

decide      fungicide      regicide

## Writing About Literature

### Evaluating a Persuasive Essay

"The Flight of Rachel Carson" appears in a collection called *Fifty Who Made the Difference*. Does Geoffrey Norman present a convincing case of the impact of Rachel Carson's book? What do you consider his strongest argument for the importance of Carson's work? Write a short essay in which you evaluate how well he achieves his purpose.

## About the Author

### Geoffrey Norman (1943– )

Geoffrey Norman grew up on the Gulf Coast of Florida and Alabama. Before becoming a columnist for *Esquire*, he worked as a magazine editor. His mystery short story, "Armed and Dangerous," was awarded an Edgar Award in 1979. A novel, *Midnight Water*, was published in 1983.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze what the essay reveals about Rachel West and her influence upon her children. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 251 will help students distinguish shades of meaning of words in sentences from West's essay.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

This essay is about children who could not see their mother outside the framework of their own needs and were unable to value her properly until they lost her. Have students consider how well they actually know their own parents.

# BIOGRAPHY AND PERSONAL RECOLLECTION

- 1 "There is properly no history; only biography," said Ralph Waldo Emerson, the great American essayist and poet. He was echoing his British contemporary and friend, Thomas Carlyle, who wrote in his own essay on history, "History is the essence of innumerable biographies."

The interest in great men and women has brought readers to biography since ancient times. We desire to know how these people thought and felt, and what may have been the source of their success in life—and their failures. We also turn to biography to discover our

- 2 "roots," to use a word Alex Haley has popularized. Perhaps more so than in any previous time, we enjoy reading about ordinary people whose lives helped shape the present world.

## My Mother, Rachel West

**DOROTHY WEST**

*Dorothy West recalls scenes of family life, anecdotes, and conversations in an effort to understand her mother. What impression do you form of Rachel West from this portrait?*

- 1 When my mother died, we who had sparred with her over the years of our growth and maturity said with relief, well, we won't have her intruding herself in our lives again. Our saying it may have been a kind of swaggering, or maybe we were in shock, trying to hide what was really inside us.

My mother had often made the declaration

that she was never going to die. She knew what 2 was here, she would say with a laugh, but she didn't know what was there. Heaven was a long way from home. She was staying right here.

So we just accepted it as fact that she would be the death of us instead. When her own death came first, we didn't know what to make

3 of it. There was a thinness in the air. There was

## BIOGRAPHY AND PERSONAL RECOLLECTION

1

Emerson's and Carlyle's comments mean that history is really the record of the accumulated actions of individuals.

2

Haley wrote the best seller *Roots* based on the history of his own family, which he traced back seven generations to its African ancestors.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes the overall impression that the essay creates. Explain to students that the anecdotes and conversations included have been carefully chosen to ensure a particular reaction from the reader. You might point out that while a writer could easily choose only happy details, Dorothy West presents an honest portrait of her late mother.

## My Mother, Rachel West

After students have read the essay, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion and analysis of what West's essay reveals about her mother and herself.

1

The opening statement comes as a shock; the writer is relieved that her mother is dead.

2

Use to answer study question 2a, p. 251.

3

**Figurative language.** The air is not literally thinner. The absence of the mother reduces tension but creates a void.



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Dorothy West tries to understand and describe both her mother and her own ambivalent feelings toward this woman who was so influential in her life. The reader, however, cannot doubt that the author feels a great sense of loss.

4

**What is the mother actually doing in her “beautiful and compelling voice”?** Cajoling the family, molding them to suit her.

5

West knew even then that her upbringing provided her with much material for writing; in fact, there were many “stories” in the household, and each personality provided material.

6

**Irony.** Long after she “knew everything,” author would still not know everything about her mother.

7

Use to answer study question 2b, p. 251.

8

Mother’s influence is so strong that it outlives the children’s irritation and bitterness, and they begin to feel the loss.

9

**Theme.** This statement is the thematic realization that, insofar as the children are loving human beings, they seem to be like their mother.

10

**What reactions have Rachel West’s children had to their mother’s influence?** Outraged protest, catcalls, weak chiding, and finally acceptance.

11

Use to answer study question 3a, p. 251.

## PRESENTATION

Some students may be somewhat shocked at Dorothy West’s assertion that Rachel West’s children were relieved when their mother died. Remind students that in reality the members of a family do not always like one another. Then

direct their attention to the second sentence of the essay, in which West softens her first remark and also introduces the ambivalence that she says is the mark of her feelings for her mother. To clarify what the author actually feels, explain to students that the essay attributes positive

silence where there had been sound and fury.

4 There was no longer that beautiful and compelling voice bending us to her will against our own.

The house that I grew up in was four-storied, but we were an extended family, continuously adding new members, and the perpetual joke was, if we lived in the Boston Museum, we’d still need one more room. Surrounded by all these different personalities, each one wanting to be first among equals, I

5 knew I wanted to be a writer. Living with them was like living inside a story.

My mother was the dominant figure by the force of her vitality, and by the indisputable fact that she had the right to rule the roof that my father provided. She was a beautiful woman, and there was that day when I was grown, eighteen or so, ready to go off on my own, sure that I knew everything, that I said to her, “Well, your beauty was certainly wasted on you. All you did with it was raise children and run your sisters’ lives.”

My mother had done what she felt she had to do, knowing the risks, knowing there would be no rewards, but determined to build a foundation for the generations unborn. She had gathered us together so that the weakness of one would be balanced by her strength, and the loneliness of another eased by her laughter, and someone else’s fears tempered by her fierce bravado, and the children treated alike, no matter what their degree of lovability, and her eye riveting mine if I tried to draw a distinction between myself and them.

We who had been the children under her command, and then the adults, still subject to her meddling in our intimate affairs, were finally bereaved, free of the departed, and in a rush to divorce ourselves from any resemblance to her influence.

When one of us said something that Mother might have said, and an outraged chorus

shouted, “You sound just like her,” the speaker, stung with shame and close to tears, shouted back, “I do not!”

Then as time passed, whoever forgot to watch her language and echoed some sentiment culled from my mother responded to the catcalls with a cool, “So what?”

As time increased its pace, although there were diehards who would never relent, there were more of us shifting positions, examining our ambivalent feelings, wondering if the life force that had so overwhelmed our exercise of free will, and now no longer had to be reckoned with, was a greater loss than a relief.

When a newborn disciple recited my mother’s sayings as if they were gospel, the chiding came from a scattered chorus of uninspired voices.

Then there was the day when someone said with wonder, “Have you noticed that those of us who sound just like her are the ones who laugh a lot, love children a lot, don’t have any hangups about race or color, and never give up without trying?”

“Yes, I’ve noticed,” one of us answered, with the rest of us adding softly, “Me, too.”

I suppose that was the day and the hour of our acknowledgment that some part of her was forever imbedded in our psyches,<sup>1</sup> and we were not the worst for it.

But I still cannot put my finger on the why of her. What had she wanted, this beautiful woman? Did she get it? I would look at her face when it was shut away, and I would long to offer her a penny for her thoughts. But I knew she would laugh and say, “I was just thinking it’s time to start dinner,” or something equally far from her yearning heart.

I don’t think she ever realized how often she made the remark, “Speech was given man to hide his thoughts.” At such times I would say

1. psyches (sī’kēz): souls.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher’s Literature Companion*: Study Guide 25 / Selection Test 25 / Reading Check 25 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 25

characteristics to Rachel West, qualities that her children did not recognize until after her death.

### CLOSURE

Ask students to characterize Rachel West and to identify the conflicting feelings that the author has for her mother.

### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have class members think of a family member or an acquaintance whom they often criticize. Challenge them to think beyond their criticisms in an attempt to discover positive qualities that they may have overlooked.

to myself, she will die with her secrets. I had guessed a few, but they had been only surface deep, easy to flush out. I know that the rest went with her on her flight to heaven.

### Reading Check

1. Why did the author want to be a writer?
2. Why did she accuse her mother of wasting her life?
3. What was the chief cause of the children's resentment?
4. Which of their mother's characteristics did the children recognize in one another?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Selection

1. Dorothy West describes her feelings toward her mother as *ambivalent*. What evidence can you find of her conflicting feelings about her mother?

2a. How did Rachel West show a sense of humor? b. How did she "build a foundation for the generations unborn"? c. What influence did she have on her children?

3. At the end of this biographical sketch, Dorothy West confesses that her mother remains a mystery. a. What questions remain unanswered about her mother's life? b. Why do you suppose Rachel West never revealed her deepest thoughts?

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Distinguishing Meanings

- 1 Explain how the word or words in brackets would change the meaning of the preceding italicized word:

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on p. 289.

There was no longer that beautiful and *compelling* [driving] voice bending us to her will against our own.

My mother was the *dominant* [governing] figure by the force of her vitality . . .

She had gathered us together so . . . someone else's fears [were] tempered by her fierce *bravado* [show of courage] . . .

### Expository Writing

#### ► Developing a Topic by Examples

Dorothy West recalls her mother's remark, "Speech was given to man to hide his thoughts." Use this quotation or another quotation as the main idea of a paragraph. Use examples from your own experience and observations to support the assertion.

### About the Author

#### Dorothy West (1910– )



*The Living Is Easy*, appeared in 1948. Of Dorothy West's relationship with her mother, Mary Helen Washington has written, "many black women writers, including West, find their own literary voices through a rediscovery of their mother's power and sensibilities." West now lives in Martha's Vineyard.

Dorothy West was born in Boston. During the 1920s she went to New York City and became a member of the Harlem Renaissance group of writers and artists. Her autobiographical novel,

### READING CHECK

1. Her life was like living in a story (p. 250).
2. She spent it raising children and running her sisters' lives (p. 250).
3. Mother's meddling in their lives (p. 250).
4. Tendency to laugh a lot, love children, have no hangups about race, and have determination (p. 250).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Was relieved when mother died but recalls "thinness in the air" and "silence"; recognizes mother's voice as "beautiful" even as it was "compelling." Says mother was interfering and domineering but presents her lovingly.

2a. Joked about possibility of her death. 2b. Provided strength, comfort, and courage—characteristics that were passed on to her children. 2c. Set example that they unconsciously followed.

3a. What she wanted out of life or if she got it. 3b. Responses will vary. Rachel seems to have been too practical and too busy to dwell on them.

### LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Compelling* suggests more irresistible force than *driving* and has a more musical sound.

*Dominant* suggests a personality that is unmistakably in control; *governing* might simply imply directing activity.

*Bravado* connotes more than just *courage*; suggests greater degree of swagger or defiance which is adopted to mask or make up for an underlying lack of confidence.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify the specific details McPhee uses to demonstrate why Bill Bradley is a great player. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes McPhee's observational and interviewing abilities, which allowed him to define Bill Bradley's talents. Encourage students to observe carefully and to learn to formulate insightful interview questions.

## A Sense of Where You Are

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion and analysis of specific details and style.

1

**Style.** McPhee's first sentence is effectively structured to intrigue the reader. Uniqueness of the cheering builds phrase by phrase. Many players are "appreciatively cheered," but not by "disinterested away-from-home crowd" and seldom "while warming up."

2

**Tripleheader,** three games played in succession on same day, is an example of jargon that applies to other sports as well as basketball.

3

**Why were the Philadelphia fans tired and disinterested?** They had already cheered local teams in two previous games and had little reason to pay attention to out-of-town team warming up for last game.

4

**Diction.** The word *crescendo* in music means increase in volume of sound; McPhee uses it to emphasize Bradley's increasing activity.

5

Again, McPhee creates musical images with *rhythm* and, later, with *cadence* to emphasize Bradley's skill.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. McPhee uses a number of words that would be considered basketball jargon. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 262 will draw students' attention to specialized vocabularies.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to describe possible attributes of a successful athlete. List their suggestions on the board, making sure that concentration and self-discipline are included since these are attributes featured in the selection.

# FROM A Sense of Where You Are

**JOHN MCPHEE**

*A Sense of Where You Are is a profile—a biographical sketch that highlights the subject's characteristics and achievements. McPhee's profile of Bill Bradley first appeared in The New Yorker magazine in January, 1965. McPhee became interested in Bradley when his father, a sports physician, suggested that he watch Bradley play basketball. McPhee watched Bradley, interviewed him, and listened to him explain his game situations. In the following excerpts, McPhee focuses on Bradley's extraordinary athletic abilities.*

1 Bradley is one of the few basketball players who have ever been appreciatively cheered by a disinterested away-from-home crowd while warming up. This curious event occurred last March, just before Princeton eliminated the Virginia Military Institute, the year's Southern Conference champion, from the N.C.A.A.<sup>1</sup> championships. The game was played in Philadelphia and was the last of a tripleheader. The 2 people there were worn out, because most of them were emotionally committed to either Villanova or Temple—two local teams that had just been involved in enervating battles with Providence and Connecticut, respectively, scrambling for a chance at the rest of the coun-

try. A group of Princeton boys shooting basketballs miscellaneously in preparation for still another game hardly promised to be a high 4 point of the evening, but Bradley, whose routine in the warmup time is a gradual crescendo of activity, is more interesting to watch before a game than most players are in play. In Philadelphia that night, what he did was, for him, anything but unusual. As he does before all games, he began by shooting set shots<sup>2</sup> close to the basket, gradually moving back until he was shooting long sets from twenty feet out, and nearly all of them dropped into the net with an 5 almost mechanical rhythm of accuracy. Then he began a series of expandingly difficult jump

1. N.C.A.A.: National Collegiate Athletic Association.

2. **set shot:** a shot taken from a stationary position in which the player's feet do not leave the ground.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 26 / Selection Test 26 / Reading Check 26 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 26



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

For Bill Bradley, a Princeton basketball star, success is the result of “a sense of where you are,” a sense that includes not only his location on a basketball court but also his position within the larger framework of the game—its history, its

rules, and its other players, whether they be opponents he must outwit or experts from whom he can learn more about his sport. McPhee uses Bradley to demonstrate that it takes concentration and self-discipline to be a “winner,” whether at sports or in life.

## PRESENTATION

Explain to students that Bill Bradley has used his powers of concentration and self-discipline in much more than sports. True, he was on the United States Olympic basketball team and played professionally with the New York Knick-

shots,<sup>3</sup> and one jumper after another went cleanly through the basket with so few exceptions that the crowd began to murmur. Then he started to perform whirling reverse moves before another cadence of almost steadily accurate jump shots, and the murmur increased. Then he began to sweep hook shots<sup>4</sup> into the air. He moved in a semicircle around the court. First with his right hand, then with his left, he tried seven of these long, graceful shots—the most difficult ones in the orthodoxy of basketball—and ambidextrously<sup>5</sup> made them all. The game had not even begun, but the presumably unimpressible Philadelphia-  
7  
ans were applauding like an audience at an opera.

Bradley has a few unorthodox shots, too. He dislikes flamboyance,<sup>6</sup> and, unlike some of basketball's greatest stars, has apparently never made a move merely to attract attention. While  
8  
some players are eccentric in their shooting, his shots, with only occasional exceptions, are straightforward and unexaggerated. Nonetheless, he does make something of a spectacle of himself when he moves in rapidly parallel to the baseline, glides through the air with his back to the basket, looks for a teammate he can  
9  
pass to, and, finding none, tosses the ball into the basket over one shoulder, like a pinch of salt. Only when the ball is actually dropping through the net does he look around to see what has happened, on the chance that something might have gone wrong, in which case he would have to go for the rebound.<sup>7</sup> That shot has the essential characteristics of a wild accident, which is what many people stubbornly think they have witnessed until they see him do

3. **jump shot**: a shot taken while a player is in the air.

4. **hook shot**: a one-handed shot in which the player protects the ball with his body.

5. **ambidextrously** (ām'bi-dēk'strəs-lē): skillfully using either hand.

6. **flamboyance** (flām-boi'əns): showiness.

7. **rebound**: the retrieval of a missed shot that has bounced off the backboard or the rim of the basket.

10  
it for the third time in a row. All shots in basketball are supposed to have names—the set, the hook, the lay-up,<sup>8</sup> the jump shot, and so on—and one weekend last July, while Bradley was in Princeton working on his senior thesis and putting in some time in the Princeton gymnasium to keep himself in form for the Olympics, I asked him what he called his over-the-shoulder shot. He said that he had never  
11  
heard a name for it, but that he had seen Oscar Robertson, of the Cincinnati Royals, and Jerry West, of the Los Angeles Lakers, do it, and had worked it out for himself. He went on to say that it is a much simpler shot than it appears to be, and, to illustrate, he tossed a ball over his shoulder and into the basket while he was talking and looking me in the eye. I retrieved the ball and handed it back to him. “When you have played basketball for a while, you don't need to look at the basket when you are in close like this,” he said, throwing it over his shoulder again and right through the hoop. “You develop a sense of where you are.”

Bradley is not an innovator. Actually, basketball has had only a few innovators in its history—players like Hank Luisetti, of Stanford, whose introduction in 1936 of the running one-hander did as much to open up the game for scoring as the forward pass did for  
12  
football; and Joe Fulks, of the old Philadelphia Warriors, whose twisting two-handed heaves, made while he was leaping like a salmon, were the beginnings of the jump shot, which seems to be basketball's ultimate weapon. Most basketball players appropriate fragments of other players' styles, and thus develop their own. This is what Bradley has done, but one of the things that set him apart from nearly everyone else is that the process has been conscious  
13  
rather than osmotic.<sup>9</sup> His jump shot, for exam-

8. **lay-up**: a one-handed shot made from a position close to the basket.

9. **osmotic** (ōz-mōt'ik): absorbed unconsciously.

6

McPhee uses a “crescendo” of images, each more spectacular than the one before.

7

**Simile.** “Like an audience at an opera” suggests Philadelphia's greatly admired Bradley's “show” of superb skill.

8

**Eccentric:** deviating in some way; odd.

9

**Simile.** “Like a pinch of salt” creates image of casual motion; derives from superstition of throwing pinch of spilled salt over shoulder to ward off evil.

10

Three such consecutive “accidents” are out of realm of probability.

11

Use to answer study question 2, p. 262.

12

This “sense” includes not only his location on basketball court but also his position within larger framework of the game.

13

**Imagery.** Author vividly describes Fulks's innovative style—“twisting two-handed heaves” and “leaping like a salmon.”

14

**What does McPhee imply by the words “rather than osmotic”?** Bradley purposefully developed his style instead of gradually absorbing techniques and strategies.

erbockers during their championship years, but he also was a Rhodes scholar, one of the highest recognitions of academic achievement. In addition, he later became a United States Senator.

In 1965, McPhee could not know exactly what Bradley would do in the future, but he probably

has not been surprised by the man's success. Have students search the selection for evidence that Bradley would succeed at anything he did and then explain how his personality and perseverance might have helped him in his later career.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In his profile, McPhee portrays Bradley as someone who practices diligently, disciplines himself to shut out all distractions, and emulates the best techniques of other players he admires. Bradley does all this because he believes he lacks the requisite "natural ability" of most other players and therefore must make up for that deficiency in other ways. One result of this, according to McPhee, is that Bradley is a "complete" basketball player.

In the photograph, Bradley is dribbling with his left hand. Consummate basketball players learn to control the ball equally well with either hand.

### Relating Expression Skills

Selected students might make oral presentations about someone whose job involves performance before a group (actor, minister, teacher, sports figure, and so on). The presentation should include a discussion of the necessary elements in a good performance: for example, the ability to use words well, good physical coordination, specific knowledge of a subject, personality of the speaker, and attitude toward the audience and toward the subject.



Bill Bradley at Princeton, January 31, 1963.

ple, has had two principal influences. One is Jerry West, who has one of the best jumpers in basketball. At a summer basketball camp in Missouri some years ago, West told Bradley that he always gives an extra hard bounce to the last dribble before a jump shot, since this seems to catapult him to added height. Bradley has been doing that ever since. Terry Dischinger, of the Detroit Pistons, has told Bradley that he always slams his foot to the

**15** floor on the last step before a jump shot, because this stops his momentum and thus prevents drift. Drifting while aloft is the mark of a sloppy jump shot.

**16** Bradley's graceful hook shot is a masterpiece of eclecticism.<sup>10</sup> It consists of the high-lifted knee of the Los Angeles Lakers' Darrall Imhoff, the arms of Bill Russell, of the Boston Celtics, who extends his idle hand far under his shooting arm and thus magically stabilizes the shot, and the general corporeal<sup>11</sup> form of Kentucky's Cotton Nash, a rookie this year with the Lakers. Bradley carries his analyses of shots further than merely identifying them with pieces of other people. "There are five parts to the hook shot," he explains to anyone who asks. As he continues, he picks up a ball and stands about eighteen feet from a basket. "Crouch," he says, crouching, and goes on to demonstrate the other moves. "Turn your head to look for the basket, step, kick, follow through with your arms." Once, as he was explaining this to me, the ball curled around the rim and failed to go in.

**17** "What happened then?" I asked him.

"I didn't kick high enough," he said.

"Do you always know exactly why you've missed a shot?"

"Yes," he said, missing another one.

"What happened that time?"

10. **eclecticism** (ĭ-klēk'tə-sīz'əm): a selection of styles from different sources.

11. **corporeal** (kôr-pôr'ē-əl): bodily.

"I was talking to you. I didn't concentrate. The secret of shooting is concentration."

His set shot is borrowed from Ed Macauley, who was a St. Louis University All-American in the late forties and was later a star member of the Boston Celtics and the St. Louis Hawks. Macauley runs the basketball camp Bradley first went to when he was fifteen. In describing the set shot, Bradley is probably<sup>1</sup> quoting a Macauley lecture. "Crouch like Groucho Marx,"<sup>12</sup> he says. "Go off your feet a few inches. You shoot with your legs. Your arms merely guide the ball." Bradley says that he has more confidence in his set shot than in any other. However, he seldom uses it, because he seldom has to. A set shot is a long shot, usually a twenty-footer, and Bradley, with his speed and footwork, can almost always take some

**18** other kind of shot, closer to the basket. He will take set shots when they are given to him, though. Two seasons ago, Davidson lost to Princeton, using a compact zone defense that ignored the remoter areas of the court. In one **19** brief sequence, Bradley sent up seven set shots, missing only one. The missed one happened to rebound in Bradley's direction, and he leaped up, caught it with one hand, and scored.

**20** Even his lay-up shot has an ancestral form; he is full of admiration for "the way Cliff Hagan pops up anywhere within six feet of the basket," and he tries to do the same. Hagan is a former Kentucky star who now plays for the St. Louis Hawks. Because opposing teams always do everything they can to stop Bradley, he gets an unusual number of foul shots.<sup>13</sup> When he was in high school, he used to imitate Bob Pettit, of the St. Louis Hawks, and Bill Sharman, of the Boston Celtics, but now his free throw is more or less his own. With his left

12. **Groucho Marx**: a comedian whose mannerisms included a crouching walk.

13. **foul shot**: an unguarded shot from the foul line, also called *free throw*, awarded to a player whose actions have been interfered with illegally by an opponent.

**15**

Although McPhee does not say so directly, readers assume that Bradley uses Dischinger's technique as well as West's.

**16**

*What makes Bradley's hook shot "a masterpiece of eclecticism"?* He has selected and put together some of best techniques of other fine players.

**17**

*Style.* Author effectively uses *dialogue* to make point that Bradley studies his own game carefully, including reflecting on missed shots.

**18**

The longer set shot has a lower probability of going in than other shots and therefore is used only when necessary.

**19**

This anecdote shows that Bradley uses his set shot capably when a tight defense keeps him away from the basket.

**20**

*Diction.* *Ancestral* conveys idea that Bradley is part of "family" of players and has adopted techniques from his elders.



21

Specific example serves as support for earlier claim that “opposing teams always do everything they can to stop Bradley”—including fouling him.

22

Illustrates Bradley’s self-discipline in practice situations.

23

Anecdote suggests Bradley’s determination and ambition.

24

*What does this anecdote demonstrate?* The remarkable accuracy of Bradley’s spatial perception.

25

McPhee contrasts other great scorers with Bradley, emphasizing Bradley’s all-around skill.

26

**Tone.** Lively description of typical team suggests author’s love for basketball.

foot back about eighteen inches—“wherever it feels comfortable,” he says—he shoots with a deep-bending rhythm of knees and arms, one-handed, his left hand acting as a kind of gantry<sup>14</sup> for the ball until the moment of release. What is most interesting, though, is that he concentrates his attention on one of the tiny steel eyelets that are welded under the rim of the basket to hold the net to the hoop—on the center eyelet, of course—before he lets fly. One night, he scored over twenty points on

21 free throws alone; Cornell hacked at him so heavily that he was given twenty-one free throws, and he made all twenty-one, finishing the game with a total of thirty-seven points.

22 When Bradley, working out alone, practices his set shots; hook shots, and jump shots, he moves systematically from one place to another around the basket, his distance from it being appropriate to the shot, and he does not permit himself to move on until he has made at least ten shots out of thirteen from each location. He applies this standard to every kind of shot, with either hand, from any distance. Many basketball players, including reasonably good ones, could spend five years in a gym and not make ten out of thirteen left-handed hook shots, but that is part of Bradley’s daily routine. He talks to himself while he is shooting, usually reminding himself to concentrate but sometimes talking to himself the way every high-school j.v. basketball player has done since the dim twenties—more or less imitating a radio announcer, and saying, as he gathers himself up for a shot, “It’s pandemonium<sup>15</sup> in Dillon Gymnasium. The clock is running out. He’s up with a jumper. Swish!”

23 Last summer, the floor of the Princeton gym was being resurfaced, so Bradley had to put in several practice sessions at the Lawrenceville

School. His first afternoon at Lawrenceville, he began by shooting fourteen-foot jump shots from the right side. He got off to a bad start, and he kept missing them. Six in a row hit the back rim of the basket and bounced out. He stopped, looking discomfited, and seemed to be making an adjustment in his mind. Then he went up for another jump shot from the same spot and hit it cleanly. Four more shots went in without a miss, and then he paused and said, “You want to know something? That basket is about an inch and a half low.” Some weeks later, I went back to Lawrenceville with a steel tape, borrowed a stepladder, and measured the height of the basket. It was nine feet ten and seven-eighths inches above the floor, or one and one-eighth inches too low.

Being a deadly shot with either hand and knowing how to make the moves and fakes that clear away the defense are the primary skills of a basketball player, and any player who can do these things half as well as Bradley can has all the equipment he needs to make a college 25 team. Many high-scoring basketball players, being able to make so obvious and glamorous a contribution to their team in the form of point totals, don’t bother to develop the other skills of the game, and leave subordinate matters like defense and playmaking largely to their 26 teammates. Hence, it is usually quite easy to parse<sup>16</sup> a basketball team. Bringing the ball up the floor are playmaking backcourt men—selfless fellows who can usually dribble so adeptly that they can just about freeze the ball by themselves, and who can also throw passes through the eye of a needle and can always be counted on to feed the ball to a star at the right moment. A star is often a point-hungry gunner, whose first instinct when he gets the ball is to fire away, and whose playing creed might be

14. **gantry**: a support.

15. **pandemonium** (pān’dā-mō’nē-əm): wild uproar or disorder.

16. **parse** (pārs): describe the function of.

condensed to "When in doubt, shoot." Another, with legs like automobile springs, is part of the group because of an unusual ability to go high for rebounds. Still another may not be especially brilliant on offense but has defensive equipment that could not be better if he were carrying a trident and a net.<sup>17</sup>

The point-hungry gunner aside, Bradley is **27** all these: He is a truly complete basketball player. He can play in any terrain; in the heavy infighting near the basket, he is master of all the gestures of the big men, and toward the edge of play he shows that he has all the fast-moving skills of the little men, too. With remarkable speed for six feet five, he can steal the ball and break into the clear with it on his own; as a dribbler, he can control the ball better with his left hand than most players can with their right; he can go down court in the middle of a fast break and fire passes to left and right, closing in on the basket, the timing of his passes too quick for the spectator's eye. He plays any position—up front, in the post,<sup>18</sup> in the backcourt. And his playmaking is a basic characteristic of his style. His high-scoring totals are the result of his high percentage of accuracy, not of an impulse to shoot every time he gets the ball.

He passes as generously and as deftly as any player in the game. When he is dribbling, he can pass accurately without first catching the ball. He can also manage almost any pass without appearing to cock his arm, or even bring his hand back. He just seems to flick his fingers and the ball is gone. Other Princeton players aren't always quite expecting Bradley's passes **28** when they arrive, for Bradley is usually thinking a little bit ahead of everyone else on the

floor. When he was a freshman, he was forever hitting his teammates on the mouth, the temple, or the back of the head with passes as accurate as they were surprising. His teammates have since sharpened their own faculties, and these accidents seldom happen now. "It's rewarding to play with him," one of them says.

**29** "If you get open, you'll get the ball." And, with all the defenders in between, it sometimes seems as if the ball has passed like a ray through several walls.

Bradley's play has just one somewhat unsound aspect, and it is the result of his mania for throwing the ball to his teammates. He can't seem to resist throwing a certain number of passes that are based on nothing but theory and hope; in fact, they are referred to by the Princeton coaching staff as Bradley's hope passes. They happen, usually, when something has gone just a bit wrong. Bradley is recovering a loose ball, say, with his back turned to the other Princeton players. Before he turned it, he happened to notice a screen, or pick-off, being set by two of his teammates, its purpose being to cause one defensive man to collide with another player and thus free an offensive man to receive a pass and score. Computations whirl in Bradley's head. He hasn't time to look, but the screen, as he saw it developing, seemed to be working, so a Princeton man should now be in the clear, running toward the basket with one arm up. He whips the ball over his shoulder to the spot where the man ought to be.

**30** Sometimes a hope pass goes flying into the crowd, but most of the time they hit the receiver right in the hand, and a gasp comes from several thousand people. Bradley is sensitive about such dazzling passes, because they look flashy, and an edge comes into his voice as he defends them. "When I was halfway down the court, I saw a man out of the corner of my eye who had on the same color shirt I did," he said recently, explaining how he happened to

**27**

McPhee makes claim that Bradley is a "truly complete" player, then proceeds to supply evidence for his claim. Cites ability to play on any terrain, to steal ball, dribble with both hands, and so on.

**28**

Suggests Bradley is highly intelligent.

**29**

Demonstrates Bradley's theoretical approach to the game; Bradley sometimes gives up opportunities to score because another player is closer to the basket and technically should have a higher percentage shot.

**30**

Earlier, McPhee referred to Bradley's "hope pass" as "somewhat unsound," yet he clearly admires this ability to throw exactly where player could logically expect a teammate to be.

**31**

**Characterization.** Bradley's sensitivity to seemingly "flashy" passes consistent with McPhee's earlier claim that Bradley makes no moves that are just for show.

17. **trident and net:** an allusion to gladiatorial combats in ancient Rome, in which these weapons were used.

18. **post:** also called *pivot*, the position closest to the basket, usually occupied by the team's tallest player, the center.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

McPhee manages to wed his subject (Bradley's attention to detail) with his own words (his careful attention to the details of Bradley's approach to basketball) to convey the importance of understanding and using one's space well. Encourage students to locate and study passages in the selection in which McPhee's attention to detail in his writing matches Bradley's attention to detail in practicing and playing basketball. You might then have students write descriptions of an activity, using vivid details to create images of the action.



Bradley shown soaring high in the consolation game of the NCAA basketball tournament, March 20, 1965.

32

Bradley defends the pass simply as a play that worked.

33

McPhee implies that Princeton, at least in Bradley's time, lacked an abundance of strong players.

34

**Characterization.** Demonstrates Bradley's commitment to playing "team basketball" and his refusal to grab limelight at expense of other players.

fire a scoring pass while he was falling out of bounds. "A little later, when I threw the pass, I threw it to the spot where that man should have been if he had kept going and done his job. He was there. Two points."

Since it appears that by nature Bradley is a passer first and a scorer second, he would probably have scored less at a school where he was surrounded by other outstanding players. When he went to Princeton, many coaches mourned his loss not just to themselves but to basketball, but as things have worked out, much of his national prominence has been precipitated<sup>19</sup> by his playing for Princeton,

19. **precipitated** (prĭ-sĭp'ə-tāt'əd): brought on or caused.

where he has had to come through with points in order to keep his team from losing. He starts slowly, as a rule. During much of the game, if he has a clear shot, fourteen feet from the basket, say, and he sees a teammate with an equally clear shot ten feet from the basket, he sends the ball to the teammate. Bradley apparently does not stop to consider that even though the other fellow is closer to the basket he may be far more likely to miss the shot. This habit exasperates his coaches until they clutch their heads in despair. But Bradley is doing what few people ever have done—he is playing basketball according to the foundation pattern of the game. Therefore, the shot goes to the closer man. Nothing on earth can make him



change until Princeton starts to lose. Then he  
35 will concentrate a little more on the basket. . .

The depth of Bradley's game is most discernible when he doesn't have the ball. He goes in and swims around in the vicinity of the basket, back and forth, moving for motion's sake, making plans and abandoning them, and always watching the distant movement of the ball out of the corner of his eye. He stops and studies his man, who is full of alertness because of the sudden break in the rhythm. The man is trying to watch both Bradley and the ball. Bradley  
36 watches the man's head. If it turns too much to the right, he moves quickly to the left. If it turns too much to the left, he goes to the right. If, ignoring the ball, the man focuses his full  
37 attention on Bradley, Bradley stands still and looks at the floor. A high-lobbed<sup>20</sup> pass floats in, and just before it arrives Bradley jumps high, takes the ball, turns, and scores.

If Princeton has an out-of-bounds play under the basket, Bradley takes a position just inside the baseline, almost touching the teammate who is going to throw the ball into play. The defensive man crowds in to try to stop whatever Bradley is planning. Bradley whirls around the defensive man, blocking him out with one leg, and takes a bounce pass and lays up<sup>21</sup> the score. This works only against naïve opposition, but when it does work it is a marvel to watch.

To receive a pass from a backcourt man, Bradley moves away from the basket and to-  
38 ward one side of the court. He gets the ball, gives it up, goes into the center, and hovers there awhile. Nothing happens. He goes back to the corner. He starts toward the backcourt again to receive a pass like the first one. His man, who is eager and has been through this

before, moves out toward the backcourt a step ahead of Bradley. This is a defensive error. Bradley isn't going that way; he was only faking. He heads straight for the basket, takes a bounce pass, and scores. This maneuver is known in basketball as going back door. Bradley is able to go back door successfully and often, because of his practiced footwork. Many players, once their man has made himself vulnerable, rely on surprise alone to complete a backdoor play, and that isn't always enough. Bradley's fake looks for all the world like the beginning of a trip to the outside; then, when he goes for the basket, he has all the freedom he needs. When he gets the ball after breaking free, other defensive players naturally leave their own men and try to stop him. In these three-on-two or two-on-one situations, the obvious move is to pass to a teammate who has moved into a position to score. Sometimes, however, no teammate has moved, and Bradley sees neither a pass nor a shot, so he veers around and goes back and picks up his own man. "I take him on into the corner for a one-on-one," he says, imagining what he might do. "I move toward the free-throw line on a dribble. If the man is overplaying me to my right, I reverse pivot and go in for a left-handed lay-up. If the man is playing even with me, but off me a few feet, I take a jump shot. If the man is playing me good defense—honest—and he's on me tight, I keep going. I give him a head-and-shoulder fake, keep going all the time, and drive to the basket, or I give him a head-and-shoulder fake and take a jump shot. Those are all the things you need—the fundamentals."

40 Bradley develops a relationship with his man that is something like the relationship between a yoyoist and his yoyo. "I'm on the side of the floor," he postulates,<sup>22</sup> "and I want to play with

35

*What does "concentrate a little more on the basket" mean?* Shoot, rather than pass. Only when team is falling behind and may lose without his accurate shooting will Bradley shoot instead of passing to player closer to basket.

36

McPhee describes Bradley's strategy when he does not have the ball. Bradley's playing reveals his superb concentration and his ability to anticipate other players' actions.

37

McPhee provides example for his claim that a good player knows "how to make the moves and fakes that clear away the defense."

38

*Style.* McPhee defines Bradley's movements in short, abrupt sentences that suggest the stop-and-go action of a basketball game.

39

McPhee clarifies meaning of basketball terms such as "going back door" by providing definitions and context clues. He also helps readers understand faking, reverse pivot, and one-on-one.

40

*Analogy.* McPhee cleverly compares Bradley and his opponent to yoyoist and his yoyo. When his opponent fails to be the perfect yoyo, Bradley scores.

20. **lobbed:** thrown in an arc.

21. **lays up:** makes a one-handed shot close to the basket.

22. **postulates** (pōs'choo-lāts'): supposes.

41

Bradley's own words provide drama; he describes the situation as if it were actually taking place.

42

McPhee describes Bradley as a unique player in terms of his analytical approach to the game.

43

McPhee contradicts Bradley's own assessment of his physical attributes and proceeds to support his assertion with details.

44

*What natural advantages does McPhee point out that Bradley possesses?* Height, strength, coordination, and keen eyesight.

my man a little bit, always knowing where the ball is but not immediately concerned with getting it. Basketball is a game of two or three men, and you have to know how to stay out of a play and not clutter it up. I cut to the baseline.

41 My man will follow me. I'll cut up to the high-post position. He'll follow me. I'll cut to the low-post position. He'll follow me. I'll go back out to my side position. He'll follow. I'll fake to the center of the floor and go hard to the baseline, running my man into a pick<sup>23</sup> set at the low-post position. I'm not running him into a pick in order to get free for a shot—I'm doing it simply to irritate him. I come up on the other side of the basket, looking to see if a teammate feels that I'm open. They can't get the ball to me at that instant. Now my man is back with me. I go out to the side. I set a screen for the guard. He sees the situation. He comes toward me. He dribbles hard past me, running his man into my back. I feel the contact. My man switches off me, leaving the pass lane open for a split second. I go hard to the basket and take a bounce pass for a shot. Two points."

42 Because Bradley's inclination to analyze every gesture in basketball is fairly uncommon, other players look at him as if they think him a little odd when he seeks them out after a game and asks them to show him what they did in making a move that he particularly admired. They tell him that they're not sure what he is talking about, and that even if they could remember, they couldn't possibly explain, so the best offer they can make is to go back to the court, try to set up the situation again, and see what it was that provoked his appreciation. Bradley told me about this almost apologetically, explaining that he had no choice but to be analytical in order to be in the game at all. "I don't have that much natural ability," he

23. **pick**: One player stands between a teammate and his defender.

said, and went on to tell a doleful tale about how his legs lacked spring, how he was judged among the worst of the Olympic candidates in ability to get high off the floor, and so on, until he had nearly convinced me that he was a motor moron. In actuality, Bradley does have certain natural advantages. He has been six feet five since he was fifteen years old, so he had most of his high-school years in which to develop his coordination, and it is now exceptional for a tall man. His hand span, measuring only nine and a half inches, does not give him the wraparound control that basketball players like to have, but, despite relatively unimpressive shoulders and biceps, he is unusually strong, and he can successfully mix with almost anyone in the Greco-Roman battles under the backboards.

His most remarkable natural gift, however, is his vision. During a game, Bradley's eyes are always a glaze of panoptic<sup>24</sup> attention, for a basketball player needs to look at everything, focusing on nothing, until the last moment of commitment. Beyond this, it is obviously helpful to a basketball player to be able to see a little more than the next man, and the remark is frequently made about basketball superstars that they have unusual peripheral<sup>25</sup> vision. People used to say that Bob Cousy, the immortal backcourt man of the Boston Celtics, could look due east and enjoy a sunset. Ed Macauley once took a long auto trip with Cousy when they were teammates, and in the course of it Cousy happened to go to sleep sitting up. Macauley swears that Cousy's eyelids, lowered as far as they would go, failed to cover his coleopteran<sup>26</sup> eyes.

Bradley's eyes close normally enough, but

24. **panoptic** (pān-ōp'tik): all-seeing.

25. **peripheral** (pə-rif'ər-əl) **vision**: the ability to see what lies on either side, above, or below, with the eyes focused straight ahead.

26. **coleopteran** (kō'lē-ōp'tər-ən): like certain insects.

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage may be used to give students practice in the reading skill of distinguishing fact from opinion. Ask students to read the passage and choose the answer that represents a fact presented in the selection. A. Bradley's at-

tempts to expand his field of vision prove that eye exercises are effective. (Opinion; there is no evidence that his exercises are effective.) B. Dr. Abrams does not believe that Bradley's field of vision is as great as he claims. (Contradicted in the passage.) C. Bradley's ability to see seventy

degrees upward is the reason he is a good player. (This is not supported by details in the passage.) D. Bradley's horizontal and vertical fields of vision are greater than what is considered perfect. (Correct.)

his astounding passes to teammates have given him, too, a reputation for being able to see out of the back of his head. To discover whether there was anything to all the claims for basket-

45 ball players' peripheral vision, I asked Bradley to go with me to the office of Dr. Henry Abrams, a Princeton ophthalmologist, who 46 had agreed to measure Bradley's total field.<sup>27</sup>

Bradley rested his chin in the middle of a device called a perimeter, and Dr. Abrams began asking when he could see a small white dot as it was slowly brought around from behind him, from above, from below, and from either side. To make sure that Bradley wasn't, in ef-

47 fect, throwing hope passes, Dr. Abrams checked each point three times before plotting it on a chart. There was a chart for each eye, and both charts had irregular circles printed on them, representing the field of vision that a typical perfect eye could be expected to have.

Dr. Abrams explained as he worked that these printed circles were logical rather than experi-

48 mentally established extremes, and that in his experience the circles he had plotted to represent the actual vision fields of his patients had without exception fallen inside the circles printed on the charts. When he finished plotting Bradley's circles, the one for each eye was 49 larger than the printed model and, in fact, ran completely outside it.

► With both eyes open and looking straight ahead, Bradley sees a hundred and ninety-five degrees on the horizontal and about seventy degrees straight down, or about fifteen and five degrees more, respectively, than what is officially considered perfection. Most surprising, however, is what he can see above him. Focused horizontally, the typical perfect eye, according to the chart, can see about forty-seven degrees upward. Bradley can see seventy degrees upward. This no doubt explains why

he can stare at the floor while he is waiting for lobbed passes to arrive from above. Dr.

Abrams said that he doubted whether a person who tried to expand his peripheral vision through exercises could succeed, but he was fascinated to learn that when Bradley was a

young boy he tried to do just that. As he walked down the main street of Crystal City, for example, he would keep his eyes focused straight ahead and try to identify objects in the

windows of stores he was passing. For all this, however, Bradley cannot see behind himself.

Much of the court and, thus, a good deal of the action are often invisible to a basketball player, so he needs more than good eyesight. He

needs to know how to function in the manner of a blind man as well. When, say, four players are massed in the middle of things behind

Bradley, and it is inconvenient for him to look around, his hands reach back and his fingers move rapidly from shirt to shirt or hip to hip.

50 He can read the defense as if he were reading Braille.

Bradley's optical endowments notwithstanding, Coach van Breda Kolff agrees with him that he is "not a great physical player," and goes on to say, "Others can run faster and

51 jump higher. The difference between Bill and other basketball players is self-discipline." The two words that Bradley repeats most often when he talks about basketball are "discipline" and "concentration," and through the exercise

of both he has made himself an infectious example to younger players. "Concentrate!" he keeps shouting to himself when he is practicing on his own. His capacity for self-discipline is so

large that it is almost funny. For example, he was a bit shocked when the Olympic basketball staff advised the Olympic basketball players to

put in one hour of practice a day during the summer, because he was already putting in two hours a day—often in ninety-five-degree tem-

peratures, with his feet squishing in sneakers

45

*Peripheral vision:* ability to see objects and movements that are not in the center of a field of vision; outer vision.

46

McPhee's purpose in having Bradley tested is to determine whether basketball players in general have acute peripheral vision; Bradley serves as a model player in this case.

47

Throwing "hope passes" suggests the possibility that Bradley might see dot because it *should* be there instead of making actual visual contact.

48

*What conclusion can be drawn from the results of the test as stated thus far?* Bradley's peripheral vision is at least superior to that of Dr. Abrams' other patients.

49

McPhee establishes that, according to test results, Bradley can see much more, both horizontally and vertically, than most people can.

50

*How does Bradley "read" the presence and movement of players behind him?* By sense of touch.

51

*Characterization.* McPhee identifies the two qualities that make Bradley a great basketball player: self-discipline and concentration. McPhee then presents evidence to support his assertion.

27. total field: of vision.



McPhee demonstrates with a specific example how Bradley conquered pain.

### READING CHECK

1. Concentration (p. 255).
2. Shooting with either hand and knowing how to clear away defense (p. 256).
3. Throwing "hope passes" (p. 257).
4. His vision (p. 260).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Uses it to make seemingly impossible shots and has keen sense of where he is within game of basketball itself: understands game and its history well.
2. Has consciously emulated other players.
3. Bradley can do everything in game: has speed of small players, power of big players; can dribble and pass with either hand; can play any position; has great self-control.
- 4a. Believes game requires discipline and concentration and that it is basically a contest between two or three men at a time.
- 4b. During practice, he repeats maneuvers until he meets personal standard of control; during game, he concentrates on an opposing team member to find his weakness, which he then exploits.

### LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. Examples of jargon: *triple-header*, *set shot*, *hook shots*, *basket*, *rebound*, *lay-up*, *foul shot*, *hoop*, *backcourt*, *pass*, and *free throw*.
2. Responses will vary, depending on sport or field selected.

that had become so wet that he sometimes skidded and crashed to the floor. His creed, which he picked up from Ed Macauley, is "When you are not practicing, remember, someone somewhere is practicing, and when you meet him he will win."

- 52 He also believes that the conquest of pain is essential to any seriously sustained athletic endeavor. In 1963, he dressed for a game against Harvard although he had a painful foot injury. Then, during the pregame warmup, it bothered him so much that he decided to give up, and he started for the bench. He changed his mind on the way, recalling that a doctor had told him that his foot, hurt the night before at Dartmouth, was badly bruised but was not in danger of further damage. If he sat down, he says, he would have lowered his standards, for he believes that "there has never been a great athlete who did not know what pain is." So he played the game. His heavily taped foot went numb during the first ten minutes, but his other faculties seemed to sharpen in response to the handicap. His faking quickened to make up for his reduced speed, and he scored thirty-two points, missing only five shots during the entire evening.

### Reading Check

1. What does Bradley consider the secret of shooting for a basket?
2. According to McPhee, what are the primary skills of a basketball player?
3. What aspect of Bradley's playing style is considered unsound by the coaching staff?
4. What does McPhee consider to be Bradley's most remarkable gift?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Selection

1. The title of McPhee's piece is taken from an interview in which Bradley uses the phrase "a sense of where you are" to describe his ability to hit a basket without looking at it. How does Bradley rely on this sense when he is playing?
2. McPhee says that most basketball players develop their own styles by imitating elements of other players' styles. How is this true of Bradley's playing strategies?
3. McPhee calls Bradley "a truly complete basketball player." What criteria does he use in making this judgment?
- 4a. What is Bradley's attitude toward the game of basketball? b. How does he demonstrate this attitude during practice and during a game?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Jargon

- Jargon** is the specialized language used by people in the same profession or line of work. In his profile of Bradley, McPhee uses a number of words that would be clear to basketball players and their fans. When he uses the word *juniper*, he is referring to a special kind of throw. When he uses the word *dribble*, he is referring to the strategy of keeping a ball moving by a succession of light bounces. List at least five other examples of sports jargon in the selection.
- 2 Choose another sport, such as baseball or football, and compile a list of terms that would be helpful to someone who wants to learn how the game is played. Or prepare a list of terms used by musicians or dancers. If you are familiar with computer language, compile a list of its special terms.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify examples of close attention to detail in McPhee's writing and in Bradley's playing. What details does McPhee use to show that Bradley is a great athlete?

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ask students to write an essay detailing how they go about learning or improving a skill.

Ask students to choose their favorite sports figure and to write an essay describing him or her in action, trying to discover exactly what makes

that person outstanding.

Some students may enjoy interviewing coaches and members of school sports teams about how they prepare for games, how much time is spent in practice, and how they study the game.

## Expository Writing

### ► Explaining the Rules of a Game

Choose some indoor or outdoor game with which you are familiar. Write an essay explaining the rules of the game. To make sure your discussion is inclusive, prepare an outline before writing. For the game of football, your outline might look like this:

#### The Rules of Football

##### I. Football field

- A. Dimensions of the playing area
- B. Position of the goalposts

##### II. Players

- A. Composition of the teams
- B. Positions and functions of the players

##### III. Equipment

- A. Uniforms
- B. Ball

##### IV. Plays

- A. Scoring
- B. Offensive and defensive plays
  - 1. Kickoff
  - 2. Runback
  - 3. Tackle
- C. Fouls

- D. Length of game
- E. Time out

##### V. Officials

- A. Referee
- B. Lineman

## About the Author

### John McPhee (1931– )



John McPhee was born in Princeton, New Jersey, and has lived there all his life. Because his father was a physician to several United States Olympic teams, athletics became an important part of McPhee's youth. He played basketball in high school and college. At Princeton he edited and wrote for the literary magazine and other publications. After graduation he wrote book reviews and pieces on "Show Business" for *Time* magazine. His association with *The New Yorker* began in 1963, when his piece "Basketball and Beefeaters" was accepted. He now is a staff writer for the magazine.

## EXPOSITORY WRITING

The exercise suggests that students prepare an outline before they begin writing. You may wish to request that students hand in their outlines as well as their essays. For greatest variety in essays, you may poll students beforehand to ensure that most students have selected different games. You may then wish to compile their essays in a booklet entitled "The Rules of the Game" for classroom distribution.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John McPhee is a professional writer who has turned out an average of one book a year for the last two decades in addition to contributing articles to *The New Yorker*. He received critical praise for his book on Alaska, *Coming into the Country*, but he has also written books on topics as diverse as geology, nuclear power, and oranges.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze how Dickens felt about himself as a child. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes a dual viewpoint, the child's experience of events and the adult's interpretation of the child's experience. Discuss with students the problems that an autobiographer faces in recollecting details.

## Fragments of an Autobiography

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion and analysis of Dickens' recollections and impressions of his childhood.

1

Dickens went to work in blacking factory in 1823.

2

**Shilling:** a coin worth 12 pence, or one twentieth of a pound; in 1824, this could buy one pound of beef and one pound of bread.

3

**Wonderful:** amazing, puzzling.

4

**Characterization.** As Dickens looks back on the bright and sensitive boy that he was, he wonders why no one objected to his being "cast away" into a life of drudgery.

5

**What does Dickens imply about his parents' attitude toward his going to work in the factory?** That they were pleased to have the money he would make and were unconcerned about his welfare.

6

Many warehouses bordered the Thames, a major shipping lane.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activities on p. 271 will help students understand Dickens' writing by explaining phrases from context and rewriting portions in modern English.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students how they would feel if they had to drop out of school and go to work in a factory for two dollars a day. Would they, like Charles Dickens, recall only bitter thoughts? Could any good come from the experience?

# Fragments of an Autobiography

## CHARLES DICKENS

*When he was twelve years old, Charles Dickens was forced to support himself by working at a blacking (shoe polish) warehouse near the Thames River. Shortly afterward his father was imprisoned for debt and the household broke up. Dickens found these experiences the most painful of his life—so painful that he never told his wife and children about them. He recorded them in an autobiography which he did not complete. These fragments of the autobiography were later revealed to his friend and trusted biographer, John Forster.*

*As you read this selection, note how Dickens keeps you aware of both the child's view and the adult's view of these experiences.*

- 1 [It was] an evil hour for me, as I often bitterly thought. Its chief manager, James Lamert, the relative who had lived with us in Bayham Street, seeing how I was employed from day to day, and knowing what our domestic circumstances then were, proposed that I should go into the blacking warehouse, to be as useful as
- 2 I could, at a salary, I think, of six shillings a week. I am not clear whether it was six or seven. I am inclined to believe, from my uncertainty on this head, that it was six at first, and seven afterwards. At any rate the offer was accepted very willingly by my father and mother, and on a Monday morning I went down to the blacking warehouse to begin my business life.
- 3 It is wonderful to me how I could have been so easily cast away at such an age. It is wonder-

ful to me that, even after my descent into the poor little drudge I had been since we came to London, no one had compassion enough on me—a child of singular abilities, quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt, bodily or mentally—to suggest that something might have been spared, as certainly it might have been, to place me at any common school. Our friends, I take it, were tired out. No one made any sign. My

5 father and mother were quite satisfied. They could hardly have been more so, if I had been twenty years of age, distinguished at a grammar school, and going to Cambridge.

The blacking warehouse was the last house on the left-hand side of the way, at old Hungerford Stairs. It was a crazy, tumbledown

6 old house, abutting of course on the river, and



### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

After having been sent to school and given reason to expect a better life than that of most nineteenth-century children, Dickens found himself, at age twelve, forced to work as a day laborer. Recalling the experience as one of pure

misery, he describes his job, the blacking warehouse where he worked, and the rats, dirt, and decay that were a part of his new life. Even harder to bear than hardship and poverty, however, were his feelings about his experiences.

### PRESENTATION

You will probably want to read the first part of the narrative aloud, pausing occasionally for interpretation, until students are somewhat accustomed to Dickens' style and are caught in the suspense of the boy's predicament.



Fleet Street, a London thoroughfare, in the nineteenth century.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

This engraving reveals the contrasts found in nineteenth-century London. In Dickens' time, London was a rich city, yet the poor lived in incredible squalor. The commercial bustle of Fleet Street, which has been a newspaper district for centuries, created wealth for the merchant class. The monumental dome of St. Paul's Cathedral dominates the scene. The poor are less visible. Children, probably, like Dickens, self-supporting, dart through the street. People are depicted carrying heavy loads, and two boys serve as beasts of burden pulling a cart, while elaborate horse-drawn carriages are visible around them.

#### Ideas for Writing

Students might write about a location that has come to be identified with a certain business or activity (such as Wall Street in New York City, which is identified with the American stock market). Students might describe an imaginary stroll along the street, either guessing at details of the scene or recalling them from a photograph or personal visit.

Upon completion of the selection, ask students which of Dickens' problems they consider most difficult. Have student volunteers read aloud passages supporting their choices. Request that they explain how they would feel and what they would do about such difficulties in their own lives.

Then ask students for their assessment of young Dickens. How well do they think he handled his misfortune? What would have happened to him if he had shirked his job, complained to other boys, or taken to thievery? What were his feelings about his situation?

After discussing the study questions, students might consider whether young Dickens already showed promise of becoming a renowned writer. What did he gain or lose from being on his own for a while at such an early age? What traits enabled him to become a great novelist?

**7**  
**Style.** Dickens' use of *and* in this sentence emphasizes just how many distasteful things offended him.

**8**  
**Gross:** twelve dozen.

**9**  
Bob Fagin was a good-hearted friend in the blacking factory but an old scoundrel in *Oliver Twist*. The fictional Fagin teaches a gang of boys to be pickpockets and thieves.

**10**  
*Oliver Twist* is Dickens' famous novel of a boy exploited first in a workhouse and later by the evil Fagin.

**11**  
Evidently, this noon-hour session was to have been a continuation of Dickens' interrupted schooling.

**12**  
*Martin Chuzzlewit* is novel about a young man who is forced to immigrate to America. He becomes disillusioned with America after his experience with swamp real estate advertised as "Eden."

**13**  
**Imp:** mischievous child or urchin; a stock character in London pantomimes.

**14**  
Although Dickens eloquently tells of deep feelings, he contends that he cannot express in words the true depth of his emotions.

**7** literally overrun with rats. Its wainscotted rooms, and its rotten floors and staircase, and the old gray rats swarming down in the cellars, and the sound of their squeaking and scuffling coming up the stairs at all times, and the dirt and decay of the place, rise up visibly before me, as if I were there again. The counting-house was on the first floor, looking over the coal barges and the river. There was a recess in it, in which I was to sit and work. My work was to cover the pots of paste-blackening, first with a piece of oilpaper, and then with a piece of blue paper; to tie them round with a string; and then to clip the paper close and neat, all round, until it looked as smart as a pot of ointment from an apothecary's<sup>1</sup> shop. When a certain number of grosses of pots had attained this pitch of perfection, I was to paste on each a printed label, and then go on again with more pots. Two or three other boys were kept at similar duty downstairs on similar wages. One of them came up, in a ragged apron and a paper cap, on the first Monday morning, to show me the trick of using the string and tying the knot.

**9** His name was Bob Fagin; and I took the liberty **14** of using his name, long afterwards, in *Oliver Twist*.

Our relative had kindly arranged to teach **11** me something in the dinner hour, from twelve to one, I think it was, every day. But an arrangement so incompatible with counting-house business soon died away, from no fault of his or mine; and for the same reason, my small worktable, and my grosses of pots, my papers, string, scissors, pastepot, and labels, by little and little, vanished out of the recess in the countinghouse, and kept company with the other small worktables, grosses of pots, papers, string, scissors, and pastepots, downstairs. It was not long before Bob Fagin and I, and another boy whose name was Paul Green, but

who was currently believed to have been christened Poll (a belief which I transferred, long afterwards again, to Mr. Sweedlepipe, in *Martin Chuzzlewit*), worked generally, side by side. Bob Fagin was an orphan, and lived with his brother-in-law, a waterman. Poll Green's father had the additional distinction of being a fireman, and was employed at Drury Lane Theater, where another relation of Poll's, I **13** think his little sister, did imps in the pantomimes.

No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship; compared these everyday associates with those of my happier childhood; and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man, crushed in my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more, cannot be written. My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such considerations, that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget in my dreams that I have a dear wife and children, even that I am a man, and wander desolately back to that time of my life.

My mother and my brothers and sisters (excepting Fanny in the Royal Academy of Music) were still encamped, with a young servant-girl from Chatham Workhouse, in the two parlors in the emptied house in Gower Street North. It was a long way to go and return within the dinner hour, and, usually, I either carried my dinner with me, or went and bought it at some neighboring shop. In the latter case, it was commonly a saveloy<sup>2</sup> and a penny loaf; some-

1. **apothecary** (ə-póth'ə-kēr'ē): druggist.

2. **saveloy** (sáv'ə-loi): spicy, dried sausage.



times, a fourpenny plate of beef from a cook's shop; sometimes, a plate of bread and cheese, and a glass of beer, from a miserable old public house over the way: The Swan, if I remember right, or The Swan and something else that I have forgotten. Once, I remember tucking my own bread (which I had brought from home in the morning) under my arm, wrapped up in a piece of paper like a book, and going into the best dining room in Johnson's a la mode beefhouse in Clare Court, Drury Lane, and magnificently ordering a small plate of a la mode beef to eat with it. What the waiter thought of such a strange little apparition coming in all alone, I don't know; but I can see him now, staring at me as I ate my dinner, and bringing up the other waiter to look. I gave him a halfpenny, and I wish now that he hadn't taken it.

*The household broke up. Dickens' mother and the younger children went to live with John Dickens in the Marshalsea Prison.*

The key of the house was sent back to the landlord, who was very glad to get it; and I (small Cain that I was, except that I had never done harm to anyone) was handed over as a lodger to a reduced old lady, long known to our family, in Little College Street, Camden Town, who took children in to board, and had once done so at Brighton; and who, with a few alterations and embellishments, unconsciously began to sit for Mrs. Pipchin in *Dombey* when she took in me.

She had a little brother and sister under her care then, somebody's natural children, who were very irregularly paid for, and a widow's little son. The two boys and I slept in the same room. My own exclusive breakfast, of a penny cottage loaf and a pennyworth of milk, I provided for myself. I kept another small loaf, and a quarter of a pound of cheese, on a particular shelf of a particular cupboard, to make my

supper on when I came back at night. They made a hole in the six or seven shillings, I know well; and I was out at the blacking warehouse all day, and had to support myself upon that money all the week. I suppose my lodging was paid for, by my father. I certainly did not pay it myself; and I certainly had no other assistance whatever (the making of my clothes, I think, excepted), from Monday morning until Saturday night. No advice, no counsel, no encouragement, no consolation, no support, from anyone that I can call to mind, so help me God.

Sundays, Fanny and I passed in the prison. I was at the academy in Tenterden Street, Hanover Square, at nine o'clock in the morning, to fetch her; and we walked back there together, at night.

I was so young and childish, and so little qualified—how could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole charge of my own existence, that, in going to Hungerford Stairs of a morning, I could not resist the stale pastry put out at half-price on trays at the confectioners' doors in Tottenham Court Road; and I often spent in that, the money I should have kept for my dinner. Then I went without my dinner, or bought a roll, or a slice of pudding.

There were two pudding shops between which I was divided, according to my finances. One was in a court close to St. Martin's Church (at the back of the church) which is now removed altogether. The pudding at that shop was made with currants, and was rather a special pudding, but was dear: two penn'orth<sup>3</sup> not being larger than a penn'orth of more ordinary pudding. A good shop for the latter was in the Strand, somewhere near where the Lowther Arcade is now. It was a stout, hale pudding, heavy and flabby, with great raisins

3. penn'orth: pennyworth.

**15** English public houses, or taverns, have signs with pictures illustrating their names: the Dancing Bear, the Blue Boar, and so on. Illustrations were necessary in earlier times, for many people could not read.

**16** *What does Dickens imply when he says that he wishes now that the waiter had not taken the halfpenny?* He wishes the waiter had been able to show him kindness and sympathy.

**17** **Allusion.** Dickens compares himself to the Biblical Cain, who was forced to wander after killing his brother Abel.

**18** Again Dickens reveals source of a fictional character: "reduced old lady" (one who has seen better times) is re-created as Mrs. Pipchin in novel *Dombey and Son*.

**19** Dickens' father, John Dickens, made a good salary as a naval clerk, but he did not manage his money responsibly.

**20** Dickens' father was imprisoned for his debts and seemed unaware, by his son's account at least, of the devastating effect his extravagance had on Charles.

**21** Dickens reflects that he was not mature enough to budget the small amount of money to buy meals for six days.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

A hub of activity in London during the time of Dickens was Covent Garden, a huge open-air market where vendors sold fresh produce and other goods. In the days before the invention and widespread use of refrigeration, shoppers bought fresh meat and produce daily. Young Dickens, however, sometimes found that his weekly wage of six or seven shillings was not enough to allow daily food purchases. Dickens describes going to this market when he had no money to buy food and staring longingly at pineapples, which would always be unobtainable with his meager wages.



A morning scene at Covent Garden, London, in the nineteenth century.

22

**Atmosphere.** As an adult looking back on boyhood hunger, Dickens recalls the food that tantalized him.

23

Dickens knew London extremely well and put this knowledge to good use in the settings of his novels and stories.

24

**What does Dickens imply with his response to the door sign?** Association with earlier sign brings back painful memories.

25

Emphasizes his lack of proper diet; his main concern was having enough to eat.

in it, stuck in whole, at great distances apart. It came up hot, at about noon every day; and many and many a day did I dine off it.

22 We had half an hour, I think, for tea. When I had money enough, I used to go to a coffee shop, and have half a pint of coffee, and a slice of bread and butter. When I had no money, I took a turn in Covent Garden market, and stared at the pineapples. The coffee shops to which I most resorted were, one in Maiden Lane; one in a court (nonexistent now) close to Hungerford Market; and one in St. Martin's Lane, of which I only recollect that it stood near the church, and that in the door there was an oval glass plate, with COFFEE ROOM painted

on it, addressed towards the street. If I ever find myself in a very different kind of coffee room now, but where there is such an inscription on glass, and read it backward on the wrong side MOOR EEFFOC (as I often used to do then, in a dismal reverie), a shock goes through my blood.

I know I do not exaggerate, unconsciously and unintentionally, the scantiness of my resources and the difficulties of my life. I know that if a shilling or so were given me by anyone, I spent it in a dinner or a tea. I know that I worked, from morning to night, with common men and boys, a shabby child. I know that I tried, but ineffectually, not to anticipate my

money, and to make it last the week through, by putting it away in a drawer I had in the counting house, wrapped into six little parcels, each parcel containing the same amount, and labeled with a different day. I know that I have louned about the streets, insufficiently and unsatisfactorily fed. I know that, but for the mercy of God, I might easily have been, for any care that was taken of me, a little robber or a little vagabond.

But I held some station at the blacking warehouse too. Besides that my relative at the countinghouse did what a man so occupied, and dealing with a thing so anomalous,<sup>4</sup> could, <sup>26</sup>to treat me as one upon a different footing from the rest, I never said, to man or boy, how it was that I came to be there, or gave the least indication of being sorry that I was there. That I suffered in secret, and that I suffered exquisitely, <sup>27</sup>no one ever knew but I. How much I suffered, it is, as I have said already, utterly beyond my power to tell. No man's imagination can overstep the reality. But I kept my own counsel, and I did my work. I knew from the first that if I could not do my work as well as any of the rest, I could not hold myself above slight and contempt. I soon became at least as expeditious and as skillful with my hands as either of the other boys. Though perfectly familiar with them, my conduct and manners were different enough from theirs to place a space between us. They, and the men, always spoke <sup>28</sup>of me as "the young gentleman." A certain man (a soldier once) named Thomas, who was the foreman, and another named Harry, who was the carman and wore a red jacket, used to call me "Charles" sometimes, in speaking to me; but I think it was mostly when we were very confidential, and when I had made some efforts to entertain them over our work with the results of some of the old readings, which

were fast perishing out of my mind. Poll Green uprore once, and rebelled against the "young gentleman" usage; but Bob Fagin settled him <sup>29</sup>speedily.

My rescue from this kind of existence I considered quite hopeless, and abandoned as such, altogether; though I am solemnly convinced that I never, for one hour, was reconciled to it, or was otherwise than miserably unhappy. I felt keenly, however, the being so cut off from my parents, my brothers, and sisters; and, when my day's work was done, going home to such a miserable blank; and *that*, I thought, might be corrected. One Sunday night I remonstrated with my father on this head, so pathetically and with so many tears <sup>30</sup>that his kind nature gave way. He began to think that it was not quite right. I do believe he had never thought so before, or thought about it. It was the first remonstrance I had ever made about my lot, and perhaps it opened up a little more than I intended. A back attic was found for me at the house of an insolvent court agent, who lived in Lant Street in the borough, <sup>31</sup>where Bob Sawyer lodged many years afterwards. A bed and bedding were sent over for me, and made up on the floor. The little window had a pleasant prospect of a timber yard; and when I took possession of my new abode, I thought it was a Paradise.

Bob Fagin was very good to me on the occasion of a bad attack of my old disorder. I suffered such excruciating pain that time, that they made a temporary bed of straw in my old recess in the countinghouse, and I rolled about on the floor, and Bob filled empty blacking bottles with hot water, and applied relays of them to my side, half the day. I got better, and quite easy towards evening; but Bob (who was much bigger and older than I) did not like the idea of my going home alone, and took me under his protection. I was too proud to let

**26**

Dickens was occasionally treated as, and clearly felt himself to be, "one upon a different footing from the rest"; his having been sent to school, even for a short time, was a distinguishing factor.

**27**

Dickens realized that he would be the subject of ridicule if he expressed his feelings about his situation.

**28**

The Dickens family had no claim to gentility. One of Charles's grandfathers was a domestic servant; the other was an embezzler. His father's indebtedness did not help family's social standing.

**29**

*What does this incident reveal about the use of the title "young gentleman"? It was a legitimate title of respect, not an ironic joke, or else no one would rebel against the usage.*

**30**

*Irony. Dickens complained about the gross injustice of his separation from his family; as a result, his father began to think the situation was "not quite right."*

**31**

Bob Sawyer is the dissipated young medical practitioner whom Sam Weller calls Mr. Sawbones in Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*.

4. **anomalous** (ə-nŏm'ə-ləs): irregular.

32

Dickens resorted to an amusing stratagem to hide truth about his abject state.

33

There seems to be a touch of pride in Dickens' assertion about the speed of his and Fagin's work.

34

Dickens recalls feelings of shame and sadness; at the time, he wondered how his father could have tolerated the embarrassment.

35

Dickens recalls that his circumstances improved but that he still felt abandoned.

36

Dickens speculates that possibly the letter objected to his working by the window where the public could witness the child's labor.

37

**Repetition.** Emphasizes how deeply Dickens was hurt. Dickens' biographers say that his mother's callousness so embittered him that he had trouble sustaining good relationships with women.

38

*Why didn't Dickens discuss this part of his childhood with other people?* Responses will vary. Apparently, the memory was too painful to tell.

32 him know about the prison; and after making several efforts to get rid of him, to all of which Bob Fagin in his goodness was deaf, shook hands with him on the steps of a house near Southwark Bridge on the Surrey side, making believe that I lived there. As a finishing piece of reality in case of his looking back, I knocked at the door, I recollect, and asked, when the woman opened it, if that was Mr. Robert Fagin's house.

I am not sure that it was before this time, or after it, that the blacking warehouse was removed to Chandos Street, Covent Garden. It is no matter. Next to the shop at the corner of Bedford Street in Chandos Street, are two rather old-fashioned houses and shops adjoining one another. They were one then, or thrown into one, for the blacking business; and had been a butter shop. Opposite to them was, and is, a public house, where I got my ale, under these new circumstances. The stones in the street may be smoothed by my small feet going across to it at dinnertime and back again. The establishment was larger now, and we had one or two new boys. Bob Fagin and I had attained to great dexterity in tying up the pots. I forget how many we could do in five minutes. We worked, for the light's sake, near the second window as you come from Bedford Street; 33 and we were so brisk at it that the people used to stop and look in. Sometimes there would be quite a little crowd there. I saw my father coming in at the door one day when we were 34 very busy, and I wondered how he could bear it.

Now, I generally had my dinner in the warehouse. Sometimes I brought it from home, so I was better off. I see myself coming across Russell Square from Somers Town, one morning, with some cold hotchpotch<sup>5</sup> in a small basin

5. **hotchpotch:** a stew of meats and vegetables.

tied up in a handkerchief. I had the same wanderings about the streets as I used to have, and 35 was just as solitary and self-dependent as before; but I had not the same difficulty in merely living. I never, however, heard a word of being taken away, or of being otherwise than quite provided for.

At last, one day, my father, and the relative so often mentioned, quarreled; quarreled by letter, for I took the letter from my father to him which caused the explosion, but quarreled very fiercely. It was about me. It may have had some backward reference, in part, for anything I know, to my employment at the window. All I am certain of is that, soon after I had given him the letter, my cousin (he was a sort of cousin, by marriage) told me he was very much insulted about me; and that it was impossible to keep me, after that. I cried very much, partly because it was so sudden, and partly because in his anger he was violent about my father, though gentle to me. Thomas, the old soldier, comforted me, and said he was sure it was for the best. With a relief so strange that it was like oppression, I went home.

My mother set herself to accommodate the quarrel, and did so next day. She brought home a request for me to return next morning, and a high character of me, which I am very sure I deserved. My father said I should go back no more, and should go to school. I do not write resentfully or angrily: for I know how all these things have worked together to make me what I am: but I never afterwards forgot, I never shall forget, I never can forget, that my mother was warm for my being sent back.

38 From that hour until this at which I write, no word of that part of my childhood which I have now gladly brought to a close, has passed my lips to any human being. I have no idea how long it lasted, whether for a year, or much



### CLOSURE

Ask students to list several important events from Dickens' childhood and to analyze how he felt about himself as a result of those incidents.

### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ninth graders are not much older than Dickens was when he went to work at the blacking warehouse. Have them write an essay comparing the life of the average modern teen-ager with that of Dickens as a teen-ager.

more, or less. From that hour until this, my father and my mother have been stricken dumb upon it. I have never heard the least allusion to it, however far off and remote, from either of them. I have never until I now impart it to this paper, in any burst of confidence with anyone, my own wife not excepted, raised the curtain I then dropped, thank God.

Until old Hungerford Market was pulled down, until old Hungerford Stairs were destroyed, and the very nature of the ground **39** changed, I never had the courage to go back to the place where my servitude began. I never saw it. I could not endure to go near it. For many years, when I came near to Robert Warren's in the Strand, I crossed over to the opposite side of the way, to avoid a certain smell of the cement they put upon the blacking corks, which reminded me of what I was once. It was a very long time before I liked to go up Chandos Street. My old home by the borough made me cry, after my eldest child could speak.

In my walks at night I have walked there often, since then, and by degrees I have come to write this. It does not seem a tithe of what I might have written, or of what I meant to write.

### Reading Check

1. What was Dickens' job at the blacking warehouse?
2. How much did he earn for his work?
3. What was he expected to provide for out of his salary?
4. When did Dickens visit his parents at the prison?
5. How was he finally "rescued" from the warehouse?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Selection

1. In this autobiographical fragment, Dickens views the most painful episode of his childhood from the vantage point of maturity.
  - a. What impression do you form of Dickens as a child from his relationship with the other boys in the blacking warehouse?
  - b. From the description of his meals and his lodgings?
  - c. From his solitary walks through the city?
2. As a writer Dickens is well known for his evocative descriptions of settings. Where in this selection does he create vivid pictures of his surroundings?
3. In his novels Dickens created a gallery of memorable characters. Where does he show that early in his life he had keen insight into human nature?

### Language and Vocabulary

#### Explaining Phrases from Context

- 1 Explain the following phrases and state what they reveal about Dickens' feelings about himself:
  - a What . . . raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me . . .
  - b . . . small Cain that I was . . .
  - c . . . a shabby child.
  - d . . . as expeditious and as skillful with my hands as either of the other boys.

#### Rewriting a Passage in Modern English

Had Dickens been writing his autobiography in the 1980s, he would have written different sentences and used different words. Rewrite the following sentence in your own language. Make your words communicate the same feelings and ideas:

The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to

**39**

**Tone.** Dickens clarifies the intensity of his distaste for his past by discussing his physical aversion to the factory and to a smell which reminded him of his job.

### READING CHECK

1. Covering and tying pots, pasting on labels (p. 266).
2. Six or seven shillings a week (p. 264).
3. His own food (p. 267).
4. On Sundays (p. 267).
5. Father and relative quarreled (p. 270).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Responses will vary. Dickens wanted company of other boys although he considered himself different. He was proud and maintained some distance.
- 1b. Responses will vary. Lived in squalid conditions and seldom had enough to eat, but managed as well as any twelve-year-old could. 1c. Responses will vary. Was observant; endured his misery privately.
2. Describing blacking warehouse, buildings, and locations.
3. "No words can express the secret agony of my soul"; description of waiter in Johnson's beef-house; analysis of fellow workers; description of Bob Fagin.

### LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

#### Explaining Phrases from Context

- 1a. Earlier, Dickens had aspirations. Books stimulated imagination ("fancy") and challenged him to equal or surpass achievements.
- 1b. "Cain" used in the sense of one exiled.
- 1c. "Shabby child" means one who is ragged, poorly clothed. Dickens felt abandoned.
- 1d. Reveals pride in fact that he did job as well as other boys.

Some students might choose a place and describe it in detail, trying to make it as realistic as Dickens does. Others might enjoy the challenge of choosing a scene described in the essay and drawing a picture of it, based only upon the information Dickens gives.

### Rewriting a Passage in Modern English

1. I can't tell you how completely neglected and hopeless I felt then; how ashamed I was of my position; how discouraged I was to see that everything I had learned and thought and enjoyed and hoped for was slipping away forever.

### EXTENDING YOUR STUDY

This exercise requiring interpretation of chapters in Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* may prove difficult to many students. You may, therefore, want to assign this only to advanced students.

### DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

To prepare students for this writing assignment, remind them that their descriptions will be enhanced by the use of sensory details and figurative language. These details may be given in either spatial or chronological order.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Though Dickens' early years were marked by strife, he eventually became an immensely popular writer. Many of his novels were published in either weekly or monthly installments in periodicals; his admirers eagerly looked forward to the release of each new segment. Dickens also gave public readings of his works, including some in the United States, which he visited twice and where he was well received.

Charles Dickens is so widely known and so well respected that almost all readers will eventually become familiar with some of his works. They are in almost every library and are available in both hardcover and paperback. Students will probably know *A Christmas Carol*, and they may

also be acquainted with *A Tale of Two Cities*. Among his novels that deal more directly with young people and that might prove most interesting are *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield*.

my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more, cannot be written.

You might want to start your sentence, "I cannot write" or "I can't tell you," instead of delaying the verb phrase until the end of the sentence as Dickens does.

### Extending Your Study

#### Investigating Attitudes

Dickens drew on his childhood experiences in the novels he wrote. In *Pickwick Papers*, for example, he describes life in a debtors' prison similar to the one in which his father was imprisoned. Read one or more of Chapters 41–45 in *Pickwick Papers*, and write a short essay on details that reveal to you the attitude in early nineteenth-century England toward poor people or those incapable of taking care of themselves. You might want to write about how Dickens reveals his own attitude toward debtors' prisons or the situation of poor people in them.

### Descriptive Writing

#### Describing a Work Experience

Describe your first work experience—whether doing odd jobs in your neighborhood, or babysitting, or helping in a family business. Tell your reader the details of the following:

your reasons for doing the work  
the nature and amount of work you did  
your feelings about the work  
the people you met, or the friends you made, or new experiences that working made possible  
the lessons you learned

Before you write, decide in what order you wish to present these details. Keep your reader in mind as you write. Let the reader see and feel these experiences as you did.

### About the Author

#### Charles Dickens (1812–1870)

Charles Dickens was born in a town on the south coast of England, where his father was a clerk in the Naval Pay Office. Dickens spent his boyhood in various parts of southeast England, including London and Rochester; he described this world in his novel *Great Expectations*.

The Dickens family moved to London permanently when Charles was ten, and sank quickly into poverty and debt. Charles was sent to work at a shoe polish warehouse when he was twelve years old. He lived in a small attic room close to the Marshalsea Prison, where his father was imprisoned for debt. Dickens later used these experiences in his novel *David Copperfield*.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the *Practice in Reading and Writing* section on p. 209.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify details that characterize Barba Nikos in "A Whole Nation and a People." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** activity on p. 278 will give students practice in determining the meaning of phrases from their context in the selection.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students if they have ever been coaxed by friends into a prank that they eventually regretted. Did they feel guilty and try to make amends?

# A Whole Nation and a People

**HARRY MARK PETRAKIS**

*In this excerpt from his autobiography, Petrakis creates a memorable portrait of a man who helped him to understand and appreciate his own ethnic culture.*

There was one storekeeper I remember above all others in my youth. It was shortly before I became ill, spending a good portion of my time with a motley group of varied ethnic ancestry. We contended with one another to de-

**1** ride the customs of the old country. On our Saturday forays into neighborhoods beyond our own, to prove we were really Americans, we ate hot dogs and drank Cokes. If a boy **2** didn't have ten cents for this repast he went hungry, for he dared not bring a sandwich from home made of the spiced meats our families ate.

**3** One of our untamed games was to seek out the owner of a pushcart or a store, unmistakably an immigrant, and bedevil him with a chorus of insults and jeers. To prove allegiance to the gang it was necessary to reserve our fiercest malevolence for a storekeeper or peddler belonging to our own ethnic background.

**4** For that reason I led a raid on the small, shabby grocery of old Barba Nikos, a short, sinewy Greek who walked with a slight limp and sported a flaring, handlebar mustache.

We stood outside his store and dared him to

come out. When he emerged to do battle, we plucked a few plums and peaches from the baskets on the sidewalk and retreated across the street to eat them while he watched. He waved a fist and hurled epithets at us in ornamental Greek.

Aware that my mettle was being tested, I raised my arm and threw my half-eaten plum **5** at the old man. My aim was accurate and the plum struck him on the cheek. He shuddered and put his hand to the stain. He stared at me across the street, and although I could not see his eyes, I felt them sear my flesh. He turned and walked silently back into the store. The boys slapped my shoulders in admiration, but **6** it was a hollow victory that rested like a stone in the pit of my stomach.

At twilight, when we disbanded, I passed the grocery alone on my way home. There was a small light burning in the store and the shadow of the old man's body outlined against the glass. Goaded by remorse, I walked to the door and entered.

The old man moved from behind the narrow wooden counter and stared at me. I

## PREREADING FOCUS

All of us have ethnic backgrounds—the diverse customs, languages, and histories that our cultural origins comprise. As the headnote suggests, the selection is about learning to appreciate one's own heritage. Have students think about their own backgrounds and how important they are to them.

## A Whole Nation and a People

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion and analysis of Barba Nikos' character and his influence on the author.

**1** *What does the author mean by "customs of the old country"? Customs of Greece, his parents' country of origin.*

**2** *Nickel hot dogs and nickel soft drinks have vanished, but peer pressure is as strong now as in Petrakis' boyhood.*

**3** *The boys' aggressive actions are a cruel way of expressing their feelings of insecurity and desire not to be thought of as foreigners.*

**4** *Petrakis tells indirectly he is Greek; leads raid against one of own.*

**5** *Why does the author throw the plum at the storekeeper? To prove courage to other boys.*

**6** *Simile. Indicates young Petrakis feels guilt even as he receives recognition he sought.*



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Harry Mark Petrakis, a Greek-American, recalls an incident from his childhood about a special man who taught him to be proud of his heritage. The author describes himself as a young teenager, anxious to be accepted by those his age. He

and his peers try to prove—to one another and to themselves—how American they are, not only by adopting American expressions and eating American food but also by harassing those who are, like themselves, immigrants. The storekeeper he harasses teaches him pride in being Greek.

## PRESENTATION

Children of immigrants have always been caught between the need to assimilate American customs and ideals and the need to be true to their ethnic heritage. Petrakis tells how he learned to embrace his Greek heritage instead of scorning

7 *What does the boy's return to the store show about him?* He is deeply sorry and brave enough to withstand "a curse or a blow"; perhaps he wants to be punished for his action.

8 Nikos is shocked to learn the boy who attacked him is Greek like himself; he has no understanding of the boy's irrational methods of trying to prove he is an American.

9 **Characterization.** The punishment reveals that Nikos is a stern disciplinarian; knowing that the boy is Greek might have made his punishment more severe and Nikos' expectations higher.

10 Although the boy is following the dictates of his conscience, he still worries about the response of his peers.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

**Exploring the Subject**  
By the fifth century B.C., the Greeks were developing a splendid culture. This illustration alone depicts a mastery of techniques in pottery, painting, music, and textiles. Greek cultural development in the areas of art and philosophy became the foundation for Western civilization.

wanted to turn and flee, but by then it was too late. As he motioned for me to come closer, I  
7 braced myself for a curse or a blow.

"You were the one," he said, finally, in a harsh voice.

I nodded mutely.

"Why did you come back?"

I stood there unable to answer.

"What's your name?"

"Haralambos," I said, speaking to him in Greek.

8 He looked at me in shock. "You are Greek!" he cried. "A Greek boy attacking a Greek grocer!" He stood appalled at the immensity of my crime. "All right," he said coldly. "You are here because you wish to make amends." His great mustache bristled in concentration. "Four plums, two peaches," he said. "That makes a total of seventy-eight cents. Call it seventy-five. Do you have seventy-five cents, boy?"

I shook my head.

9 "Then you will work it off," he said. "Fifteen cents an hour into seventy-five cents makes"—he paused—"five hours of work. Can you come here Saturday morning?"

"Yes," I said.

"Yes, Bárba Nikos," he said sternly. "Show respect."

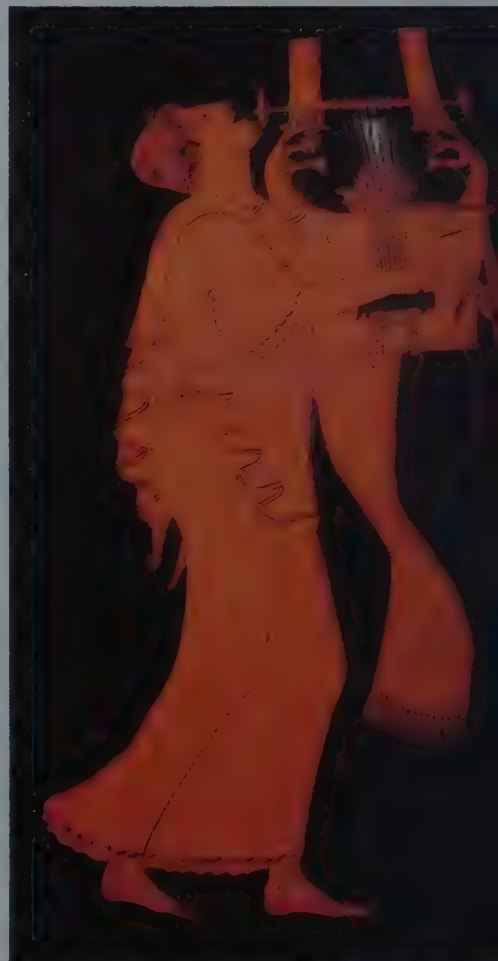
"Yes, Barba Nikos," I said.

"Saturday morning at eight o'clock," he said. "Now go home and say thanks in your prayers that I did not loosen your impudent head with a solid smack on the ear." I needed no further urging and fled.

Saturday morning, still apprehensive, I returned to the store. I began by sweeping, raising clouds of dust in dark and hidden corners. I washed the windows, whipping the squeegee swiftly up and down the glass in a fever of fear that some member of the gang would see me. When I finished I hurried back inside.

For the balance of the morning I stacked cans, washed the counter, and dusted bottles

of yellow wine. A few customers entered, and Barba Nikos served them. A little after twelve o'clock he locked the door so he could eat lunch. He cut himself a few slices of sausage, tore a large chunk from a loaf of crisp-crust



Greek vase, early fifth century B.C., showing a red-figured musician.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Fletcher Fund

it. His portrait of the impassioned Greek storekeeper Barba Nikos should impress young students and perhaps cause them to search out and listen with new respect to the people of their own ethnic backgrounds.

If your students have carried out the interview

projects described in the beginning of the *Teacher's Manual* (p. 50), you will have an ideal avenue of approach to the selection. What national strains have they discovered in their own ancestry? What have they learned to appreciate that they did not know about previously? Is

America made richer by the customs, arts, foods, talents, and dreams of many nations and races?

Use the For Study and Discussion questions on p. 277 to bring out the events, characterization, and values of the selection. You may wish

bread, and filled a small cup with a dozen black shiny olives floating in brine. He offered me  
11 the cup. I could not help myself and grimaced.

"You are a stupid boy," the old man said. "You are not really Greek, are you?"

"Yes, I am."

"You might be," he admitted grudgingly. "But you do not act Greek. Wrinkling your nose at these fine olives. Look around this store for a minute. What do you see?"

"Fruits and vegetables," I said. "Cheese and olives and things like that."

He stared at me with a massive scorn. "That's what I mean," he said. "You are a bone-  
12 head. You don't understand that a whole nation and a people are in this store."

13 I looked uneasily toward the storeroom in the rear, almost expecting someone to emerge.

"What about olives?" he cut the air with a sweep of his arm. "There are olives of many shapes and colors. Pointed black ones from  
16 Kalamata, oval ones from Amphissa, pickled green olives and sharp tangy yellow ones. Achilles<sup>1</sup> carried black olives to Troy and after a day of savage battle leading his Myrmidons, he'd rest and eat cheese and ripe black olives such as these right here. You have heard of Achilles, boy, haven't you?"

"Yes," I said.

"Yes, Barba Nikos."

"Yes, Barba Nikos," I said.

He motioned at the row of jars filled with  
14 varied spices. "There is origanon there and basilikon and daphne and sesame and miantanos, all the marvelous flavorings that we have used in our food for thousands of years. The men of Marathon<sup>2</sup> carried small packets

of these spices into battle, and the scents reminded them of their homes, their families, and their children."

He rose and tugged his napkin free from around his throat. "Cheese, you said. Cheese! Come closer, boy, and I will educate your abysmal ignorance." He motioned toward a wooden container on the counter. "That glistening white delight is feta, made from goat's milk, packed in wooden buckets to retain the flavor. Alexander the Great demanded it on  
15 his table with his casks of wine when he planned his campaigns."

He walked limping from the counter to the window where the piles of tomatoes, celery, and green peppers clustered. "I suppose all you see here are some random vegetables?" He did not wait for me to answer. "You are dumb again. These are some of the ingredients that go to make up a Greek salad. Do you know what a Greek salad really is? A meal in itself, an experience, an emotional involvement. It is  
16 created deftly and with grace. First, you place large lettuce leaves in a big, deep bowl." He spread his fingers and moved them slowly, carefully, as if he were arranging the leaves. "The remainder of the lettuce is shredded and piled in a small mound," he said. "Then comes celery, cucumbers, tomatoes sliced lengthwise, green peppers, origanon, green olives, feta, avocado, and anchovies. At the end you dress it with lemon, vinegar, and pure olive oil, glistening golden in the light."

He finished with a heartfelt sigh and for a moment closed his eyes. Then he opened one eye to mark me with a baleful intensity. "The story goes that Zeus<sup>3</sup> himself created the recipe and assembled and mixed the ingredients on Mount Olympus<sup>4</sup> one night when he had invited some of the other gods to dinner."

3. Zeus: in Greek mythology, the king of the gods.

4. Mount Olympus: the home of the ancient Greek gods and goddesses.

## 11

*Is it in character for Petrakis to grimace when offered the food? Yes, he and his friends habitually scorn ethnic food.*

## 12

Nikos' phrase becomes the title for Petrakis' autobiography, suggesting the truth and depth of the curious statement.

## 13

Petrakis does not understand the meaning of Nikos' words until Nikos supplies supporting details to illustrate his point.

## 14

*Origanon*: Greek name for several aromatic plants, especially oregano; *basilikon* is Greek for basil; *daphne* is plant named for Greek nymph Daphne; *sesame* refers to seeds used for oil; *miantanos* is mint.

## 15

*Allusion*. Alexander the Great, one of greatest generals of all time; king of Greece (356–323 B.C.) who united warring factions in Greece, led armies against Persians, and founded Alexandria in Egypt.

## 16

*Characterization*. Descriptions of Nikos' actions help characterize him as one who is sincere and deeply respectful of his culture.

1. Achilles (ə-kil'ēz): a legendary Greek warrior, hero of the epic poem *The Iliad*.

2. Marathon: an ancient Greek village, site of a battle between the Greeks and the Persians in the fifth century B.C.

to incorporate in your presentation discussion of students' related experiences—the feelings they have had about thoughtless pranks of their own and their interests in family and community heritage.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The sights, smells, and tastes of Greek food reminded the young Petrakis of the foreign heritage he tried to deny in an effort to become fully American. Later, however, he understood the old grocer's feeling of reverence for his cultural heritage and a cuisine "fit for the gods."

17

The boy may be looking at clock because he wants to escape Nikos' lecture.

18

*Kokoretsi*: roasted intestines wound on a spit. *Retsina* and *mavrodaphne*: kinds of wine.

19

*Loukoumades*: fritters with honey. *Glatoubouriko*: custard dessert.

20

*What does Nikos mean by his statement?* Boy has paid his debt; he advises him not to do such things again.

21

It is only later that Petrakis recognizes the importance of Barba Nikos' words.

22

*Simile*. "Curling like mist" creates visual image of Nikos and food of his culture.

23

Statement suggests that Petrakis begins to understand and appreciate what Nikos had been teaching him about Greek culture.

He turned his back on me and walked slowly again across the store, dragging one foot slightly behind him. I looked uneasily at the 17 clock, which showed that it was a few minutes past one. He turned quickly and startled me. "And everything else in here," he said loudly. "White beans, lentils, garlic, crisp bread, 18 kokoretsi, meatballs, mussels and clams." He paused and drew a deep, long breath. "And the wine," he went on, "wine from Samos, Santorini, and Crete, retsina and mavrodaphne, a taste almost as old as water . . . and then the fragrant melons, the pastries, yellow diples 19 and golden loukoumades, the honey custard glatoubouriko. Everything a part of our history, as much a part as the exquisite sculpture in marble, the bearded warriors, Pan<sup>5</sup> and the oracles at Delphi,<sup>6</sup> and the nymphs dancing in the shadowed groves under Homer's<sup>7</sup> glittering moon." He paused, out of breath again, and coughed harshly. "Do you understand now, boy?"

He watched my face for some response and then grunted. We stood silent for a moment until he cocked his head and stared at the clock. "It is time for you to leave," he motioned 20 brusquely toward the door. "We are square now. Keep it that way."

21 I decided the old man was crazy and reached behind the counter for my jacket and cap and started for the door. He called me back. From a box he drew out several soft, yellow figs that he placed in a piece of paper. "A bonus because you worked well," he said. "Take them. When you taste them, maybe you will under- 22 stand what I have been talking about."

I took the figs and he unlocked the door and I hurried from the store. I looked back once



and saw him standing in the doorway, watching me, the swirling tendrils of food curling like mist about his head.

I ate the figs late that night. I forgot about them until I was in bed, and then I rose and took the package from my jacket. I nibbled at one, then ate them all. They broke apart between my teeth with a tangy nectar, a thick sweetness running like honey across my tongue and in the pockets of my cheeks. In the morning when I woke, I could still taste and inhale their fragrance.

I never again entered Barba Nikos' store. My spell of illness, which began some months later, lasted two years. When I returned to the streets I had forgotten the old man and the grocery. Shortly afterwards my family moved from the neighborhood.

5. **Pan**: a god of fields and forests.

6. **oracles . . . Delphi**: The gods were consulted through oracles—priests and priestesses who uttered divine prophecies.

7. **Homer**: a Greek epic poet, author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.



Some twelve years later, after the war, I drove through the old neighborhood and passed the grocery. I stopped the car and for a moment stood before the store. The windows were stained with dust and grime, the interior bare and desolate, a store in a decrepit group of stores marked for razing so new structures could be built.

I have been in many Greek groceries since then and have often bought the feta and Kalamata olives. I have eaten countless Greek salads and have indeed found them a meal for the gods. On the holidays in our house, my wife and sons and I sit down to a dinner of steaming, buttered pilaf like my mother used to make and lemon-egg avgolemono and roast lamb richly seasoned with cloves of garlic. I drink the red and yellow wines, and for dessert I have come to relish the delicate pastries coated with honey and powdered sugar. Old Barba Nikos would have been pleased.

But I have never been able to recapture the halcyon flavor of those figs he gave me on that day so long ago, although I have bought figs many times. I have found them pleasant to my

**24** tongue, but there is something missing. And to this day I am not sure whether it was the figs or the vision and passion of the old grocer that coated the fruit so sweetly I can still recall their savor and fragrance after almost thirty years.

## Reading Check

1. What type of food did Harry and his friends eat to prove they were Americans?
2. Why did Harry go to Barba Nikos' store alone?
3. Why did Harry work for Barba Nikos?
4. What was Harry's greatest fear while he worked at the store?
5. What gift did Barba Nikos give Harry as a bonus?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Selection

1. In his opening paragraphs, Petrakis tells how he and his friends banded together to reject their own ethnic backgrounds. Why is this information important to understanding the experience he narrates?
- 2a. What details characterize Barba Nikos?  
b. What shows his feelings about how children are raised in America?
3. Although the narrator wants the respect of his companions, he feels that the attack on the grocer is "a hollow victory." Why?
- 4a. What role does ancient Greek culture play in Barba Nikos' life?    b. How does the culture shape his values?
- 5a. How does the concluding statement about the figs suggest a central point or thesis?  
b. Is the appearance of the store twelve years later important to what Petrakis is saying about Barba Nikos' values and world?

**24**

Suggests that Nikos made a lasting impression on Petrakis, who now realizes fully the importance of his Greek heritage.

### READING CHECK

1. Ate hot dogs and drank Cokes (p. 273).
2. He felt remorse (p. 273).
3. Pay for fruit taken by boys (p. 274).
4. He might be seen by his friends (p. 274).
5. Figs (p. 276).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Shows that he is uncertain of his identity; explains conflict with Nikos.
- 2a. Short, has mustache, slight limp, piercing eyes, and hot temper. 2b. His treatment of Petrakis, his belief that children are kept ignorant of their culture, and his shock to see that Petrakis has no loyalty to his ethnic roots.
3. He feels guilt when Nikos shudders and glares at him.
- 4a. Nikos is proud of being Greek and appreciates ancient Greek literature, art, mythology, and history. 4b. His entire commercial enterprise is an extension of Greek tastes in food.
- 5a. The "vision and passion" and the personality of Nikos have made an unforgettable impression on Petrakis. 5b. Responses will vary. Yes, in sense that other people should be ready to transmit Greek values and culture to oncoming generations.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to discuss the character of Nikos and decide what Petrakis learned from his experience with Nikos. Students might relate the events in the selection to their own experiences or discuss their ethnic heritages.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. "Motley group": group of different origins.  
"Our fiercest malevolence": our strongest hostility.  
"My mettle was being tested": my courage was being tested.  
"Your abysmal ignorance": your profound ignorance.  
"Created deftly and with grace": created skillfully and gracefully.  
"He motioned brusquely": he gestured abruptly.  
"Swirling tendrils of food": swirling spirals of food.  
"Decrepit group of stores": broken-down group of stores.  
"The halcyon flavor of those figs": the pleasing flavor of those figs.

## NARRATIVE AND DESCRIPTIVE WRITING

This assignment merits careful planning in class and several days of outside time for writing and revising. Also, these essays could be assembled in a class anthology or displayed on a bulletin board.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The influence Barba Nikos had on Petrakis is profound. Not only did Petrakis learn to accept his cultural heritage, but he also developed a deep appreciation for it. He admits that his work was greatly influenced by the philosophy and writings of Nikos Kazantzakis of the Greek island of Crete, which had been his parents' home before they immigrated to the U.S.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Some students might have a friend or relative who has actually experienced the trauma of emigrating from one country to another or who is a first-generation descendant of immigrants. Suggest that they interview this person.

Barba Nikos recites passages of the history of Greece in connection with the food he sells. Request that students develop oral presentations in which they name and describe their favorite ethnic food and explain something about the country of origin.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Examining Phrases from Context

#### 1 Explain these phrases from the selection:

- ... motley group ...
- ... our fiercest malevolence ...
- ... my mettle was being tested ...
- ... your abysmal ignorance.
- ... created deftly and with grace.
- ... he motioned brusquely ...
- ... swirling tendrils of food ...
- ... decrepit group of stores ...
- ... the halcyon flavor of these figs ...

## Narrative and Descriptive Writing

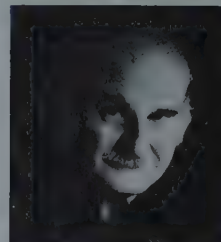
### Writing About a Personal Experience

Write an essay on someone who influenced your life in the way Barba Nikos influenced the narrator. Describe the person fully—physical appearance, manner of speech, values, attitude toward children, and other pertinent details. In your opening paragraph tell your readers who you are and why you are narrating the experience.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on p. 209.

## About the Author

### Harry Mark Petrakis (1923- )



Harry Mark Petrakis has written novels and short stories about Greek-American life. His characters are people who live with memories of another culture and seek to join the old ways with

new customs and attitudes. Petrakis was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and worked at an assortment of jobs, in steel mills and driving trucks, before becoming a writer. The selection reprinted here is taken from his autobiography, *Stelmark*.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of what Mark Twain means by the “language” of the river. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher’s Manual*.

## FOCUS 1

The excerpt is rich with **figurative language**. The study questions focus on Twain’s use of **analogy** and **metaphor** and should enhance students’ understanding of Twain’s literary style.

## FOCUS 7

Display a large United States map. Point out to students such locations as Hannibal, Missouri, and New Orleans, Louisiana, the principal port city of the Mississippi River. Encourage students to point out other places along the river.

# FROM Life on the Mississippi

**MARK TWAIN**

*Before turning to a career as a writer, Samuel Langhorne Clemens worked as a Mississippi river pilot. In 1863 he chose the pen name Mark Twain—adopting the leadsman’s call on Mississippi riverboats. “By the mark, twain,” indicated a depth of two fathoms, or twelve feet, a safe depth for riverboats.*

*In this excerpt, Twain draws an analogy—an extended comparison—between reading a book and reading a river. What does the “language” of the river consist of? What does Twain feel he sacrifices for mastery of this language?*

1 The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book—a book that was a dead language to the uneducated passenger, but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell every day. Throughout the long twelve hundred miles there was never a page that was void of interest, never one that you could leave unread without loss, never one that you would want to skip, thinking you could find higher enjoyment in some other thing. There never was so wonderful a book written by man; never one whose interest was so absorbing, so unflagging, so sparkingly renewed with every

3 reperusal.<sup>1</sup> The passenger who could not read it was charmed with a peculiar sort of faint dimple on its surface (on the rare occasions 4 when he did not overlook it altogether); but to the pilot that was an *italicized* passage; indeed, it was more than that, it was a legend of the largest capitals, with a string of shouting exclamation points at the end of it; for it meant that a wreck or a rock was buried there that could tear the life out of the strongest vessel that ever floated. It is the faintest and simplest expression the water ever makes, and the most hideous 5 to a pilot’s eye. In truth, the passenger who could not read this book saw nothing but all

1. **reperusal** (rē’pə-rōō’zəl): rereading.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher’s Literature Companion*: Study Guide 29 / Selection Test 29 / Reading Check 29 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 31

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote alludes to Twain’s **analogy** between reading a book and reading a river. Students who have experienced canoeing or rafting might be able to explain to the class how one “reads” a river. When entering a rapids, for example, a canoeist heads for the center of the “V” formed by the current.

## Life on the Mississippi

After students have read the essay, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion of the extended comparisons.

1

**Metaphor.** Twain compares river to book from which he learns information; message of “book” has no meaning for those who do not understand it.

2

Swift currents constantly change river; to ignore its “stories” could be dangerous.

3

Twain contrasts passenger and skilled “reader” of the river.

4

**Metaphor.** Seemingly small ripples on the water are like italicized passages in a book—indications of important detail.

5

Passengers, unlike pilots, may not be literate in language of river.



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

As a riverboat pilot, Mark Twain regards the Mississippi River as an ever-changing book, one that always offers something new. The reading of the river, however, is serious, for a misreading might lead to tragic consequences. Nevertheless, Twain

realizes that, as he has gained skill in reading the river, he has also lost something he highly values.

## PRESENTATION

Mark Twain was a prolific and often misunderstood writer. A good way to introduce this selection is by using another **analogy**. Twain himself was like the river about which he writes: on the surface, friendly, witty, and full of amus-

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artists

Currier and Ives (Nathaniel Currier, 1813–1888, and J. Merritt Ives, 1824–1895) were a famous team of American lithographers and print publishers of scenes and events in nineteenth-century American life. Their lithographs (drawings made in reverse on a slab of stone or on grained metal plates and printed onto paper) are nostalgic, seeming to transport a viewer back to a time that is now thought of as simpler, slower, and more appealing than the hectic modern age.

### Exploring the Subject

The Mississippi River takes its name from the Ojibwa Indians (*missi*, meaning “big”; *ssippii*, meaning “river”), and it lives up to that name, flowing 2,350 miles from its headwaters in Lake Itasca in northwestern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi was once the major “road” in the central part of the nation, and it still carries millions of tons of produce and manufactured goods every year. Even in our time, despite all the dams, locks, and levees built to discipline the river, it is still eroding land, flooding towns, and changing channels. Pilots still face the challenge of reading the river.



*Maiden Rock.* A Currier and Ives lithograph.  
Museum of the City of New York

ing stories; underneath, harboring dark fears and uncertainties. Some of his later writing was actually withheld from publication until after the death of his last child. He feared the public would be shocked and disappointed to learn what their favorite "humorist" really thought.

As the students work through this selection about the river's loss of romance and poetry, remind them that Twain is classed with the great realists. Explain that this group came after the Romantics and insisted that life should be portrayed as it really is rather than in some idealized

way. This selection could be seen as Twain's sad but honest farewell to Romanticism. Once having understood the dangers that underlie the river's beauty, he could never "not know" they are there, could never again be innocent of them.



manner of pretty pictures in it, painted by the sun and shaded by the clouds, whereas to the trained eye these were not pictures at all, but  
6 the grimmest and most dead-earnest of reading matter.

Now when I had mastered the language of this water and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river! I still keep in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when  
7 steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous; in one place a long, slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy flush was faintest, was a smooth spot that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced; the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the somber shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long ruffled trail that shone like silver; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendor that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances: and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it, every passing moment, with new marvels of coloring.

I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I

6

*What is the significance of the term "dead-earnest"? It emphasizes dangers of incorrectly reading signs of river.*

7

*Imagery. Twain's description is rich with images of movement and color; illustrates his close attention to detail and his intense feeling for river.*



## CLOSURE

Ask students to discuss the effectiveness of Mark Twain's **analogy**. What other things might be said to have a language?

8

**Style.** The highlighted passage is one long, fluid sentence. Twain's flowing prose is appropriate for describing flux of the river.

9

Where he once saw a wonderful sunset, he now sees only its practical meanings and their portents for his boat and its passengers.

### READING CHECK

1. 1,200 miles (p. 279).
2. A wreck or rock (p. 279).
3. A special sunset (p. 281).
4. Romance and beauty (p. 282).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** Signs by which river reveals what is underneath. **1b.** Dimple on surface meant wreck or rock beneath; sun on river meant wind the next day; floating log told of rising river; slanting mark meant a bluff reef; "boils" indicated dissolving bar and changing channel; lines and circles on slick water meant shoals.

**2a.** Mysterious, magical quality of surface viewed with imagination and innocence. **2b.** Description of a special sunset.

**3.** Like a doctor who sees disease beneath surface beauty, Twain sees perils underneath surface beauty of river.

### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

You may want to review the patterns of organization for comparison and contrast. In the block method, all of the ideas about one topic are presented first, followed by all of the ideas about the other topic. The point-by-point method discusses each feature of both topics one at a time. In either pattern, facts, incidents, sensory or concrete details, and examples may be used to point out similarities or differences between the topics.

began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face; another day came when I ceased altogether to note

8 them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I should have looked upon it without rapture, and should have commented upon it, inwardly, after this fashion: This sun means that we are going to have wind tomorrow; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of these nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling "boils" show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that the troublesome place is shoaling up<sup>2</sup> dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the "break" from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?

9 No, the romance and the beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to a doctor but a "break" that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn't he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has

gained most or lost most by learning his trade?

## Reading Check

1. How many miles of river did Twain learn to read?
2. What did a dimple on the surface of the water indicate to him?
3. What is Twain's most cherished memory of the river?
4. What does Twain say were lost once he acquired knowledge of the river?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Selection

1. An **analogy** draws a point-by-point comparison between two things. **a.** What does Twain mean by the "language" of the river? **b.** What specific examples does he give of "reading" the river?
- 2a. What does Twain mean by the "poetry" of the river? **b.** What example does he give?
3. What similarity does Twain see between his own experience and that of a doctor?

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Comparing Two Passages

Compare the passage in which Twain describes the wonderful sunset on the river with the passage in which he views the sunset scene from the pilot's viewpoint. What differences are there in the tone of the two passages? In your answer consider the connotations of the words Twain uses.

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

2. **shoaling up:** becoming shallow.



### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students write descriptive essays about something they once found exciting but now have outgrown or become bored with, examining and explaining their reactions to it then and now. Encourage students to include an analogy

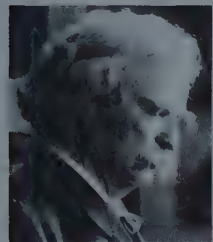
in their essays.

Students might like to collect pictures and articles about the old riverboat days and make a classroom display. Another possibility for collections would be songs about this romantic period in America's past.

It is still possible to ride on a Mississippi riverboat. The old showboats have been revived in some places. Some of your students might have had this experience. Ask these students to relate their experiences in written or oral reports.

## About the Author

### Mark Twain (1835–1910)



Samuel Langhorne Clemens was raised in Hannibal, Missouri, on the Mississippi River. At twelve he was apprenticed to a town printer. Later in his life he worked as a typesetter, a Missis-

sippi river pilot, a Nevada prospector, and a journalist. For a short time he was an irregular soldier on the Confederate side, in the Civil War.

Twain's reputation as a writer grew with his humorous travel books. *Innocents Abroad*, published in 1869, was his first successful book in this genre. Twain enjoyed portraying innocent Americans who find themselves in the clutches of cunning European hotel owners and tour guides; his comparison of American and European customs was always to the advantage of the former. In other books like *Roughing It* (1872), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883), and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), Twain drew on his Mississippi boyhood and experiences in the American West.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Samuel Langhorne Clemens began publishing sketches in newspapers as early as 1852, but not until February 2, 1863, did he first sign his work Mark Twain. His earliest popularity resulted from short stories and sketches that were published in *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Other Sketches* (Webb, 1867). He continued writing short pieces, available in collections such as *The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain* (Doubleday, 1957) and *The Complete Humorous Sketches and Tales of Mark Twain* (Doubleday, 1961). Twain's novels are currently available from various publishers in both hardbound and paperback editions. Novels students find particularly appealing include *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Prince and the Pauper*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Some students may also enjoy reading more of *Life on the Mississippi*.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze Lopez' impressions and perceptions of the Arctic tundra. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Literary Elements and Language and Vocabulary** activities on p. 286 will give students practice in understanding **tone** and distinguishing denotative from connotative meanings.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Show students pictures of arctic areas. Then initiate a discussion about the extreme environment north of the Arctic Circle, where the sun never sets for a period during summer and never rises for a period during winter.

# FROM Arctic Dreams

**BARRY LOPEZ**

*Barry Lopez first visited the Arctic in 1977 when he was doing research on wolves. Later he returned and traveled around Canada, Alaska, and Greenland, taking notes for his book Arctic Dreams. In this selection from the preface, Lopez gives his impressions of the landscape and its creatures.*

## PREREADING FOCUS

You might explain to students that part of the "dreamlike" quality of arctic experience comes from the "texture" of arctic light. The sun never shines directly overhead; for a good part of the day the angle of the sun's light is acute, creating an eerie effect.

## Arctic Dreams

After students have read the selection, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding a discussion of Lopez' impression of the tundra.

1

Caribou is the only species of deer in which both sexes have antlers.

2

**Tone.** As a naturalist, Lopez studies wildlife with interest, empathy, and awe.

3

Members of a wolf pack share responsibility for care of pups. A yearling wolf would not be a parent but would be an older brother, sister, or cousin on guard duty.

4

A North American bird guide will provide excellent illustrations of the striking mating plumage of species like the golden plover and Lapland longspur.

5

**Formidable:** causing fear or dread.

One summer evening I was camped in the western Brooks Range<sup>1</sup> of Alaska with a friend. From the ridge where we had pitched our tent we looked out over tens of square miles of rolling tundra along the southern edge of the calving grounds of the Western Arctic caribou herd. During those days we observed not only caribou and wolves, which we'd come to study, but wolverine and red fox, ground squirrels, delicate-legged whimbrels and aggressive jae-<sup>2</sup>gers, all in the unfoldings of their obscure lives. One night we watched in awe as a young grizzly bear tried repeatedly to force its way past a yearling wolf standing guard alone before a den of young pups. The bear eventually gave up and went on its way. We watched snowy owls and rough-legged hawks hunt and caribou drift like smoke through the valley.

On the evening I am thinking about—it was breezy there on Ilingsnorak Ridge, and cold; but the late-night sun, small as a kite in the

northern sky, poured forth an energy that burned against my cheekbones—it was on that evening that I went on a walk for the first time among the tundra birds. They all build their nests on the ground, so their vulnerability is extreme. I gazed down at a single horned lark no bigger than my fist. She stared back as resolute as iron. As I approached, golden plovers abandoned their nests in hysterical ploys, artfully feigning a broken wing to distract me from the woven grass cups that couched their pale, darkly speckled eggs. Their eggs glowed with a soft, pure light, like the window light in a Vermeer<sup>3</sup> painting. I marveled at this intense and concentrated beauty on the vast table of the plain. I walked on to find Lapland longspurs as still on their nests as stones, their dark eyes gleaming. At the nest of two snowy owls I stopped. These are more formidable animals than plovers. I stood motionless. The wild glare in their eyes receded. One owl settled back slowly over its three eggs, with an aura of

1. **Brooks Range:** a mountain range north of the Arctic Circle.

2. **whimbrel** (hwim'brəl): a wading bird; **jaeger** (yā'gər, jā'gər): a sea bird that snatches other birds' food.

3. **Vermeer** (vər-mār',-mīr'): Jan Vermeer (1632–1675), a Dutch painter known for the exquisite lighting of interior scenes.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this unit, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 30 / Selection Test 30 / Reading Check 30 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 32

### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

In this brief excerpt from *Arctic Dreams*, the author is camped out in the Brooks Range, an area in the far north of Alaska, overlooking the tundra. Lopez describes the tundra as teeming with life and glowing in redeeming light.

### PRESENTATION

Have students consult an encyclopedia or similar source for information about and pictures of the wildlife discussed. As they read, encourage students to compare the animals they have seen to their counterparts in the essay. Have them con-

sider how closely Lopez' description fits with what they can see in the pictures. Have students keep in mind their earlier expectations and preconceived ideas about the "frozen tundra," as that area has long been called.



primitive alertness. The other watched me, and immediately sought a bond with my eyes if I started to move.

I took to bowing on these evening walks. I would bow slightly with my hands in my pockets, toward the birds and the evidence of life in their nests—because of their fecundity,<sup>4</sup> unexpected in this remote region, and because of the serene arctic light that came down over the land like breath, like breathing.

I remember the wild, dedicated lives of the birds that night and also the abandon with which a small herd of caribou crossed the Kokolik River to the northwest, the incident of only a few moments. They pranced through like wild mares, kicking up sheets of water across the evening sun and shaking it off on the far side like huge dogs, a bloom of spray that glittered in the air around them like grains of mica.

I remember the press of light against my

face. The explosive skitter of calves among grazing caribou. And the warm intensity of the eggs beneath these resolute birds. Until then, perhaps because the sun was shining in the very middle of the night, so out of tune with my own customary perception, I had never known how benign sunlight could be. How forgiving. How run through with compassion in a land that bore so eloquently the evidence of centuries of winter.

### Reading Check

1. What two animals had Lopez come to study?
2. Why are the nests of tundra birds so vulnerable?
3. How do the plovers try to distract Lopez?
4. Lopez says there are three things he remembers from his evening walks. What are they?

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

Without protection of trees and bushes, tundra birds must protect their young in alternative ways, including camouflage. The plumage of the sandpiper and its downy young (nestling under its brooding feathers) blends with the lichens.

#### Relating Expression Skills

Students might collect pictures of various forms of wildlife and prepare a collage to display in class. The collage might focus on only one locale (such as the desert or the seacoast) and wildlife peculiar to that setting, or it might include wildlife from a variety of areas.

6

**What does Lopez' bowing signify?** Bowing is a sign of reverence. Lopez is awed by the ability of the birds to fill the vast tundra with their numbers; he admires their fecundity.

7

**Simile. Mica** (from Greek *mi-kros*, small): mineral silicates that crystallize and can then be separated into very thin sheets and particles. Comparison of spray of water to mica creates image of brilliance.

8

Lopez talks about the "press of light" because, during a period of summer above the Arctic Circle, one can feel the direct rays of the sun twenty-four hours a day.

### READING CHECK

1. Caribou and wolves (p. 284).
2. Built on ground (p. 284).
3. Pretend to have broken wings (p. 284).
4. Caribou, lives of birds, press of sunlight on face (p. 285).

4. **fecundity** (fĕ-kŭn'də-tē): fertility.



## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Teems with life and glows with sunlight.
2. Resolution and courage with which they defend their nests, which are built on the ground.
- 3a. As benign—gentle, mild—and compassionate. 3b. It lacks fierce heat and shines all night long.
4. Observation apparent especially in meticulous description of birds and their behavior and of caribou as they cross river; empathy evident in admiration for struggles and courage of birds; sense of wonder expressed as he marvels at beauty of tundra and feels serenity of arctic light.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Awe at the tenacity of both the bear's repeated attacks and the young wolf's resolute defense.
2. "Artfully," "resolute as iron" (plovers); "prancing" (caribou); "golden," "glowed," "soft, pure light," "gleaming" (sun).
3. Recognition of their fecundity.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Iron:** denotes a metal; connotes strength, determination, firmness.
- Bloom:** denotes a flower; connotes radiance and a kind of glow.
- Explosive:** denotes an agent that causes an explosion or the nature of an explosion; connotes pent-up energy suddenly released.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Selection

1. The tundra is usually thought of as a vast, frozen, treeless plain. What aspect of the tundra is emphasized in this selection?
2. Lopez refers to "the wild, dedicated lives of the birds." What most impresses him about the tundra birds?
3. Throughout this selection Lopez keeps us aware of the evening sun and its effect upon him. a. What new perception does he have of the sun? b. Why does he characterize it as "forgiving"?
4. In reviewing *Arctic Dreams*, Edward Hoagland, himself a noted nature writer, spoke of Lopez' "talent for close observation, empathy [sympathetic understanding], freshness and wonder." Where in this selection are there examples of these qualities?

## Literary Elements

### Tone

**Tone** is the attitude a writer takes toward his or her subject or readers. A writer's tone is revealed through **diction**, or choice of words, and details. In the first paragraph of the selection, Lopez says that he and his companion watched "in awe" as a bear tried to attack a den of wolf cubs. How does the word *awe* convey Lopez' attitude? Locate other words and phrases that are further evidence of his attitude toward his subject. What is revealed by his gesture of bowing toward the birds?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Distinguishing Denotative from Connotative Meanings

In addition to their literal, or **denotative**, meanings, words have suggested, or **connotative**, meanings. The word *tiger*, for example, **denotes**, or names, a particular member of the cat family; we have given the **denotation** when we have stated all the ways the tiger is different from all members of the class of animals to which it belongs. The word *tiger* also **connotes**, or suggests, different feelings to people: beauty to some, terror and mystery to others. The English poet William Blake describes a tiger in the opening lines of one of his poems:

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry!

Beauty, terror, mystery, perfection of form—all of these **connotations** are evoked by Blake. None of them is a quality or feeling we find in the dictionary definition of the tiger.

1. In the following excerpts, what do the italicized words denote, and what additional feelings and qualities do they connote?

She stared back as resolute as *iron*.

... a *bloom* of spray that glittered in the air around them like grains of mica.

The *explosive* skitter of calves among grazing caribou.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify Lopez' impressions of different animals of the tundra and cite specific passages in which he describes his impressions. What attitude toward the animals does he convey?

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students choose one creature—bird or mammal—and describe it fully. Observation of a live specimen is preferable so that they can try to capture its movements in words; if none is available, however, a picture will suffice.

Lopez has been compared to Edwin Way Teale in his skill as a nature writer. Have students write an essay comparing this excerpt from *Arctic Dreams* with Teale's "The Death of a Tree" (p. 234). They might explain which they like more or which they found easier to read.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Comparing and Contrasting Attitudes

Several authors whose work appears in this unit have expressed their attitudes toward nature: Brenda Peterson, in "Growing Up Game" (page 221); Edwin Way Teale, in "The Death of a Tree" (page 234); Geoffrey Norman, in "The Flight of Rachel Carson" (page 240); and Barry Lopez, in the selection from *Arctic Dreams*.

Choose any two of these selections and compare and contrast the authors' attitudes toward the natural world. For example, do Norman and Lopez share similar feelings about wild birds? Are there any differences in their points of view? Write a brief essay in which you develop your position. For assistance in planning and writing your paper, see the section called *Writing About Literature* at the back of this textbook.

## About the Author

### Barry Lopez (1945– )



Barry Holstun Lopez was born in Port Chester, New York, and attended the University of Notre Dame and the University of Oregon. His first best-selling work of non-fiction was *Of Wolves and Men* (1978), which achieves an effective balance of mystery and fact about the wolf. It was followed, in 1979, by *River Notes: The Dance of Herons*, which is about a mountain river and the relationships that develop between the people and animals that live along its banks.

Lopez has been compared, favorably, to other distinguished American naturalists such as Edwin Way Teale, Edward Abbey, Sally Carrighar, and Loren Eiseley. He has received the John Burroughs Medal for distinguished natural history writing, the Christopher Medal for humanitarian writing, and the American Book Award for *Arctic Dreams* (1986). Lopez has also written short works of fiction. At present he is a contributing editor to *Harper's* and the *North American Review*.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

You may wish to take this opportunity to review the steps of the writing process in class. Students can then practice following the steps—prewriting, writing, evaluating, revising, proofreading, and writing a final version—as they complete this exercise. You may need to stimulate students' consideration of possible subjects with further questions such as the following: Which two authors emphasize the interdependence of living things? Which two look at nature most reverently or most spiritually? Which two provide the most memorable imagery of wildlife? Which two empathize most strongly with species other than human beings?

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Students who have an interest in either the Arctic or in Eskimos might enjoy reading *Arctic Dreams* or *Of Wolves and Men*. Lopez traveled to Alaska and across the vast reaches of Canada to gather material for *Arctic Dreams*. One of the ways he learned about hunting wolves was by asking Eskimos what they had learned from observing them. He also asked the Eskimos whether they or the wolves were better hunters.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of cause-and-effect relationships in nonfiction writing.

## PRESENTATION

This section is designed to give students practice in analyzing cause-and-effect relationships in nonfiction writing. It is suggested that this lesson be used for oral discussion.

A passage from Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*

is provided for study. Students are asked to list, as they read, examples of cause-and-effect relationships used by Carson to show the chain of events resulting from a single act—the spraying of sagelands with pesticide.

# DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

## UNDERSTANDING CAUSE-AND-EFFECT RELATIONSHIPS

Students will use different wording in their lists, but they should be able to see the relationship of the cause to its effect.

### Answers

(C denotes Causes; E denotes Effects)

1. C—pressure from cattlemen; E—government spraying.  
C—spraying; E—killed sage, killed willows.

C—loss of willows; E—moose left, beavers left.

C—absence of beavers; E—dams decayed.

C—decay of dams; E—lake drained.

C—loss of lake; E—trout died, waterfowl left.

C—no wildlife; E—no recreational area.

C—no wildlife or vegetation; E—a desert place.

## Understanding Cause-and-Effect Relationships

You may remember these lines from your childhood:

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost;  
For want of the shoe, the horse was lost;  
For want of the horse, the rider was lost;  
For want of the rider, the battle was lost;  
For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost;  
And all from the want of a horseshoe nail!

These lines illustrate, in a very elementary way, the principle of cause and effect. A single cause—the loss of a nail—leads to an effect—the loss of a horse. That effect then becomes the cause of still another effect—the loss of the rider, and so forth.

In order to develop an idea, a writer often depends upon cause-and-effect relationships. In the following passage from *Silent Spring*, note how Rachel Carson shows the chain of events resulting from a single act—the spraying of sagelands with pesticides. As you read the passage, list the causes in one column and the effects in a second column.

Some 10,000 acres of sagelands were sprayed by the [United States Forest] Service, yielding to pressure of cattlemen for more grasslands. The sage was killed, as intended. But so was the green, life-giving ribbon of willows that traced its way across these plains, following the meandering streams. Moose had lived in these willow thickets, for willow is to the moose what sage

is to the antelope. Beaver had lived there, too, feeding on the willows, felling them and making a strong dam across the tiny stream. Through the labor of the beavers, a lake backed up. Trout in the mountain streams seldom were more than six inches long; in the lake they thrived so prodigiously that many grew to five pounds. Waterfowl were attracted to the lake, also. Merely because of the presence of the willows and the beavers that depended on them, the region was an attractive recreational area with excellent fishing and hunting.

But with the “improvement” instituted by the Forest Service, the willows went the way of the sagebrush, killed by the same impartial spray. . . . The moose were gone and so were the beaver. Their principal dam had gone out for want of attention by its skilled architects, and the lake had drained away. None of the large trout were left. None could live in the tiny creek that remained, threading its way through a bare, hot land where no shade remained. The living world was shattered. . . .



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the organization of expository paragraphs.

## PRESENTATION

This section is designed to instruct students in the use of expository writing—that is, writing that gives information. Two passages from Edwin Way Teale's "The Death of a Tree" are used to provide students with experience in analyzing

expository writing. Using the first, students are asked to analyze the organization of the paragraph. Using the second, students are asked to determine the logic of organization.

# PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

## Expository Writing

*Exposition* is writing that gives information, explains something, or expresses an opinion. Exposition is generally built around a central, or *controlling*, idea, which the writer develops by details, examples, reasons, or a combination of all three methods. Most expository writing follows this overall structure: the controlling idea is stated in the introductory paragraph or paragraphs, developed in the body of the piece, and then summarized or reinforced in the conclusion.

A similar structure may be used for individual paragraphs. Very often the central idea of a paragraph is stated in a *topic sentence*. This idea is then supported by details, examples, or reasons.

Analyze the organization of this paragraph from "The Death of a Tree" by Edwin Way Teale:

For a great tree death comes as a gradual transformation. Its vitality ebbs slowly. Even when life has abandoned it entirely it remains a majestic thing. On some hilltop a dead tree may dominate the landscape for miles around. Alone among living things it retains its character and dignity after death. Plants wither; animals disintegrate. But a dead tree may be as arresting, as filled with personality, in death as it is in life. Even in its final moments, when the massive trunk lies prone and it has moldered into a ridge covered with mosses and fungi, it arrives at a fitting and a noble end. It enriches and refreshes the earth. And later, as part of other green and growing things, it rises again.

1. What is the controlling idea of the paragraph and where is it expressed?
2. How does Teale support this idea in the paragraph?
3. What transitional words help to make clear the movement of the author's thought?
4. Does the paragraph have a concluding, or "clincher," sentence?

Here is another paragraph from the same essay. What is the logic of organization?

Like a river flowing into a desert, the life stream of the tree dwindled and disappeared before it reached the topmost twigs. They died first. The leaf at the tip of each twig, the last to unfold, was the first to wither and fall. Then, little by little, the twig itself became dead and dry. This process of dissolution, in the manner of a movie run backward, reversed the development of growth. Just as, cell by cell, the twig had grown outward toward the tip, so now death spread, cell by cell, backward from the tip.

## Suggestions for Writing

Write a paragraph of exposition developing one of these topics or a topic of your own:

How to Start a Stamp (Coin) Collection  
Methods of Energy Conversion  
Building a Classroom Terrarium  
Recycling Clothes (Furniture)

## EXPOSITORY WRITING

Analysis of a well-written expository paragraph is undoubtedly one of the most practical and beneficial exercises for ninth-grade students who are trying to develop their own organization skills for writing.

## Answers

1. In the first sentence: "For a great tree death comes as a gradual transformation."
2. Uses details of the transformation, the example of a dead tree dominating the landscape, and a contrast with other dying things.
3. Such words and expressions as "even when," "but," "even," and "and later." Use of pronoun *it* also makes the passage smoothly coherent.
4. Yes. Last sentence rounds out idea of "gradual transformation."

## Answers

1. Teale discusses the way the tree dies "backward from the tip." Students should see that the logic of organization is to show the reversal of the tree's outward growth by means of factual details and effective analogies or comparisons: "a river flowing into a desert" and "in the manner of a movie run backward."

### SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING

This section provides students with an assignment to write a paragraph of exposition. Several topics are given, but students should be encouraged to choose a topic of their own if they prefer. In the prewriting stage students should limit the topic so that it can be adequately explained in one paragraph. Also, students should examine their topics to determine the most effective pattern of organization of ideas. Chronological order and order of importance are often used in expository writing. In the writing stage, students should remember to define or explain terms (jargon) that may be unfamiliar to their audience. When students evaluate their first draft, have them look critically at their use of details, examples, facts, or reasons that support the topic sentence. Do they inform the audience about the topic? Should any of the supporting details be changed or replaced to make them more informative or interesting?

### WRITING A PARAGRAPH USING FACTS AND STATISTICS

Remind students to classify or group similar facts and statistics under a heading that explains how they are related. Once they have the different headings, students should decide the best order in which to present the information. For this assignment, you may want to recommend the order of importance.

### Prewriting

- Make a list of your ideas.
- Compose a topic sentence that expresses your central idea.
- Jot down details, examples, facts, or reasons that support or develop your topic sentence.
- Arrange your ideas in a logical order that will best express your point.

### Writing

- Keep your audience and purpose in mind as you write your draft.
- Use appropriate transitional expressions to connect your ideas.

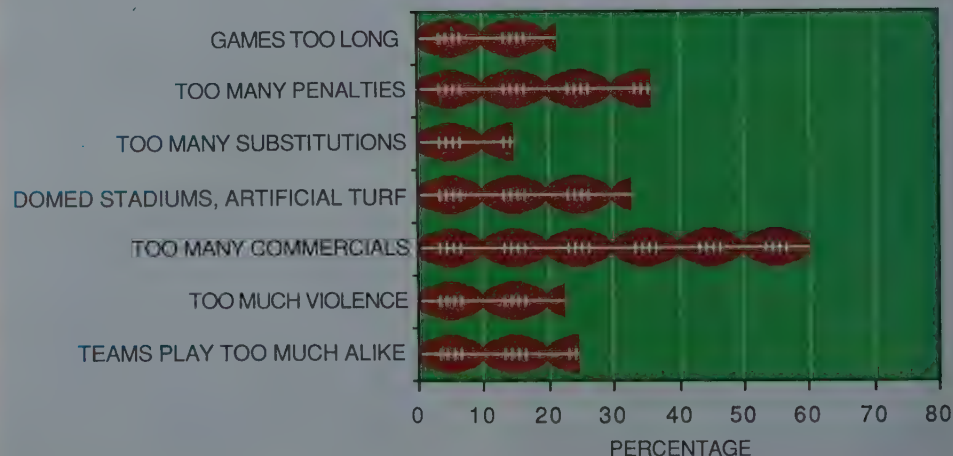
### Writing a Paragraph Using Facts and Statistics

The following graph is based on information from a poll conducted in 1984. Study the graph. Then write a paragraph based on the facts and statistics of this survey.

### Evaluating, Revising, and Proofreading

- Does the topic sentence identify your topic and state your main idea clearly?
- Is there adequate development of the topic sentence?
- Is each sentence related to the main idea?
- Are the ideas arranged in a logical order?
- Are relationships between sentences expressed clearly?
- Is there a concluding sentence?
- Have you corrected errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization?

### COMPLAINTS ABOUT PRO FOOTBALL



## For Further Reading

Carson, Rachel, *Silent Spring* (Houghton, Mifflin, 1962)

A naturalist presents data about the dangerous effects of synthetic insecticides.

Dahl, Roald, *Going Solo* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1986)

Dahl tells about three years of his life in Africa working for Shell Oil and then training for the R.A.F.

Herriott, James, *James Herriott's Dog Stories* (St. Martin's, 1986)

A country veterinary surgeon tells about many of his experiences taking care of dogs.

Lipsyte, Robert, *Assignment Sports* (Harper & Row, 1984)

This is a collection of essays on Olympic gymnasts, baseball, and boxing.

McCullough, David, editor, *American Childhoods: An Anthology* (Little, Brown, 1987)

This collection includes a wide variety of recollections from colonial times to the present.

McPhee, John, *The John McPhee Reader* (Vintage, 1977)

This collection includes essays on tennis, oranges, birch-bark canoes, and visionary aircraft.

Mehta, Ved, *Sound-Shadows of the New World* (Norton, 1986)

A fifteen-year-old blind boy travels to America to enroll in the Arkansas School for the Blind.

Quammen, David, *Natural Acts: A Sidelong View of Science and Nature* (Dell, 1982)

Included are essays on bats, blubber, octopus eyes, and a terrifying tropical fish.

Siner, Howard, editor, *Sports Classics: American Writers Choose Their Best* (Coward-McCann, 1983)

Here are pieces from the *New York Post*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *The New Yorker*.

Steffens, Lincoln, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (Harvest paperback, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)

Here is the life story of a great journalist who became famous in the reform movement called "muckraking," which exposed political and financial corruption early in this century.

Stuart, Jesse, *The Thread That Runs So True* (Scribner's, 1968; paperback, Scribner's)

The novelist and poet recalls his unusual experiences as a young teacher in a one-room Kentucky schoolhouse.

Teale, Edwin Way, *A Walk Through the Year* (Dodd, Mead, 1978)

The well-known naturalist sets down his experiences and discoveries as he walks through Trail Wood, his New England homestead.

Thomas, Lewis, *Lives of a Cell: Notes of a Biology Watcher* (Viking Press, 1974; paperback, Bantam)

Thomas' reflections on language, music, ants and ecology, and other subjects form a bold vision of the world around us.

Thurber, James, *My Life and Hard Times* (paperback, Harper & Row, 1973)

In this collection of incidents from his early days in Columbus, Ohio, Thurber satirizes the silly things people sometimes do when they think they are using good sense.

Twain, Mark, *Life on the Mississippi* (many editions)

Twain reminisces about Mississippi riverboat life and his youthful experiences as an apprentice to a steamboat pilot.

White, E. B., *Essays of E. B. White* (Harper & Row, 1977)

Chosen by White himself, these uncommonly amusing essays are grouped under such headings as "The Farm," "The Planet," and "The City."

### FOR FURTHER READING

In cooperation with librarians, give students the opportunity to explore their interests by using the library. Several class periods may be needed for library orientation and selection of nonfiction reading. Students might browse through magazines and report on articles that interest them, or they might choose a biography, an autobiography, or a book of essays for a book report. You might have students choose their method of reporting: writing journal notes, writing short compositions, making oral presentations, or conducting class discussions.



# TEACHING GUIDE

## POETRY

### OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

This poetry unit contains forty-six poems and is divided into ten sections. Each of the sections focuses on a specific aspect of poetry: the speaker, diction, imagery, figurative language, sound patterns, structure, tone, comparative themes, and types of poetry. The Speaker section demonstrates that the speaker may, as in Robert Graves's "The Face in the Mirror," or may not, as in Percy Bysshe Shelley's "The Cloud," be the poet. The Diction section points out the importance of the poet's use of "the one right word" to achieve a desired effect, as is done by Samuel Allen in "To Satch," John Masefield in "Cargoes," and Langston Hughes in "Dream Deferred." The Images section features a variety of poems rich in imagery. The seven poems in the next section, Figurative Language, introduce students to language that is not intended to be interpreted in a literal sense. The titles suggest the poems' non-literal dimensions: "The Day is Done" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose" by Emily Dickinson, "It Bids Pretty Fair" by Robert Frost, "Moon Tiger" by Denise Levertov, "Silver" by Walter de la Mare, "A Song of the Moon" by Claude McKay, and "Mending Wall" by Frost. The Sound Patterns section contains poems that demonstrate uses of rhythm and meter, free verse cadences, rhyme and rhyme scheme, onomatopoeia, alliteration, assonance, and parallelism. Students will study the sound patterns in "The Destruction of Sennacherib" by George Gordon, Lord Byron, "Jazz Fantasia" by Carl Sandburg, "Eldorado" by Edgar Allan Poe, "Next!" by Ogden Nash, "The Shell" by James Stephens, Psalm 96 from *The King James Bible*, and "Starfish" by Lorna Dee Cervantes. Structures of poems—stanzaic patterns, sonnets, free verse, and unusual layouts—are studied in "The Sound of the Sea" by Longfellow, "Sonnet 55" by William Shakespeare, "Manhole Covers" by Karl Shapiro, "400-meter Freestyle" by Maxine Kumin, and "The Time We Climbed Snake Mountain" by Leslie Marmon Silko. Tone is specifically analyzed in the following section, which includes Frost's "At Woodward's Gardens," Kenneth Fearing's "Art Review," and Pat Mora's "Bribe." The Poems for Comparison section shows students how two different poets deal with the subject of war: Alfred, Lord Tennyson in "The Charge of the Light Brigade" and Robert Southey in "The Battle of Blenheim." The final section, Types of Poetry, is divided into Lyric Poetry, Narrative Poetry, and Dramatic Poetry. Lyric poems are "John Anderson My Jo" by Robert Burns, "O Mistress Mine" by Shakespeare, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by Wordsworth, "Loveliest of Trees" by A. E. Housman, "Desert Places" by Frost, and "Recessional" by Rudyard Kipling. Narrative poems are "Lord Randal" (anonymous), "All in green went my love riding" by E. E. Cummings, and "The Castle" by Edwin Muir. Dramatic poetry is represented with Shakespeare's "The Seven Ages of Man" from *As You Like It*, "Uphill" by Christina Rossetti, and

"The Erl-King" by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, translated by Sir Walter Scott. The unit concludes with two special features: **Developing Skills in Critical Thinking** provides guidelines for analyzing poems; **Practice in Reading and Writing** offers practice in paraphrasing a poem and in comparing two poems.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

The aims of the unit are for the student:

- To demonstrate recognition and understanding of the speaker of a poem
- To analyze the diction in poems
- To identify and analyze imagery in poems
- To identify and analyze the use of figurative language such as simile, metaphor, and personification
- To demonstrate recognition and understanding of the sound effect of such devices as rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, onomatopoeia, repetition, and parallelism
- To analyze the structure as well as the meaning of poems
- To identify, analyze, and interpret tone and theme in poems
- To demonstrate recognition and understanding of different forms of lyric, narrative, and dramatic poetry
- To expand vocabulary by analyzing the structure and meanings of words in poems
- To write paraphrases of poetry
- To write compositions of analysis
- To write poems in imitation of some of those in the unit

### CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The following concepts and skills are treated in the unit:

#### Close Reading of a Poem

Explication 295

Guidelines for Reading a Poem 297

#### Literary Elements and Reading Skills

Speaker 298

Diction 302, 307

Denotation 305

Connotation 305

Imagery 308

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\*The letters *TM* preceding a page number indicate a reference to the Teacher's Manual.

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"Sonnet 55" William Shakespeare 352	Shakespearean Sonnet 353 Octave 353 Sestet 353 Quatrain 353 Couplet 353		
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"The Time We Climbed Snake Mountain" Leslie Marmon Silko 359			
<i>Tone</i>	Tone 361		
"At Woodward's Gardens" Robert Frost 362			Communicating Tone in a Description 363 Writing a Fable 363
"Art Review" Kenneth Fearing 364			
"Bribe" Pat Mora 366		Analyzing the Use of Verbals in a Poem TM 202	Analyzing Tone 366



SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
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"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" William Wordsworth 377			
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"Desert Places" Robert Frost 380			Describing a Scene in Nature 380
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## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Analyzing a Poem 398

## Practice in Reading and Writing

Paraphrasing a Poem 399  
Comparing Two Poems 399  
What Is Poetry? 400

## INTRODUCING THE UNIT

You may want to introduce the poetry unit by asking students to share positive experiences they have had with poetry—perhaps even bringing to class favorite poems or song lyrics. Help students to see that poetry is related to their own lives by pointing out how poems and lyrics express feelings and experiences common to all people.

Explain to students that they should receive both enjoyment and understanding from their study of poetry. You may want to use an analogy comparing learning to read a poem with learning to drive a car. Point out that both skills require determination and practice and both culminate in a rewarding experience.

Although the text of a poem largely determines its interpretation, you may want to emphasize that reading and enjoying poetry is also a personal and individual endeavor—individual backgrounds and world views will significantly affect students' responses to and preferences in poetry. For example, those students who enjoy nature will respond well to poems about nature such as "A Bird Came Down the Walk," whereas students who enjoy sports may prefer "To Satch."

Your overall introduction should give students an idea of where they are going in the unit but should not overwhelm them. For example, you may announce any required projects, journals, or folders at this point but save specific instructions for later. Emphasize that assignments (especially projects) will be an opportunity for students to pursue and share their individual interests and that these experiences should be positive and enjoyable.

You might also discuss the ten sections into which poems in this unit are divided. Explain that the sections are merely for convenience of studying particular elements or types of poetry, and that what students learn as critical readers in one section may be applied to other sections. For example, they will encounter Poe's "Eldorado" under Sound Patterns, but they also could discuss Poe's use of diction, imagery, and figurative language in the poem. Tell students that they will be studying the speaker of poems (the speaker may not necessarily be the poet), the poet's choices of words, language designed to create "imagined pictures or sensations," figurative language, sound patterns, and structures of poems. The section on tone will help students bring together all the poetic elements they have been studying. Only by awareness of all of these aspects will they be able to perceive tone. They also will be comparing two poems on a common theme (war) and

studying three distinct types of poetry—lyric, narrative, and dramatic.

After your general introduction to the unit, you may use the **Close Reading of a Poem** section for a more focused introduction to poetry. In conjunction with your discussion of this section, you may want to provide your students with some simple questions to consider as they read a poem: What is the purpose of the poem? How is the purpose achieved? How well is the purpose achieved? The *Teacher's Manual* contains a much longer list of questions that will be helpful to students later in the unit.

## FOR REINFORCEMENT / EVALUATION

The **Closure** feature in this unit provides suggestions for reinforcing and concluding classroom instruction. In addition to the **Reading Check** feature in the textbook, a *Study Guide* worksheet and test for each selection or group of selections in the unit are available in the *Teacher's Literature Companion*.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING SCHEDULE

If possible, you will want to spend from four to five weeks on this unit. The following schedule may be adapted to fit individual classroom needs and objectives:

Introduction, Close Reading, *The Speaker*, *Diction*: one week

*Imagery*, *Figurative Language*: one week

*Sound Patterns*, *Structure*, *Tone*: one to two weeks

*Types of Poetry* (lyric, narrative, dramatic), End-of-the-unit activities: one week

## USING THE FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS

This unit contains all Pupil's Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. The top margins contain teaching strategies to be used for in-class reference and for planning lessons. The side margins offer information related directly to the text that appears on the reduced pages. These side-margin annotations are designed primarily to be used after students have read the literary selections and can therefore serve as in-class lecture notes.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

*Last Red Tulips* illustrates Brady's ability to recreate textures—an interest that stems partly from her experience as a textile designer. Brady has developed the surface of the painting by layering translucent washes of color on white paper. As a result, the painting has more depth than most watercolors, the red tulips have a velvety texture, and the leaves seem to shimmer in reflected light.

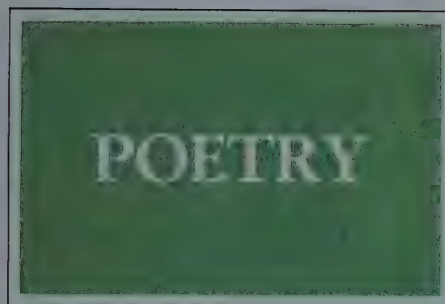
### About the Artist

Carolyn Brady has been a major influence in the recent revival of interest in watercolor as an artistic medium. Often associated with the photorealism movement, the artist works from photographs of her carefully staged still-life subjects.

### Relating Expression Skills

Students may practice creating their own artistic images by arranging brightly colored flowers, fruits, or other objects and then trying to capture the balance, color, and texture of their arrangement in still-life compositions. Students may use watercolors, as Brady has, or any number of other media, including tempera and collage.





## POETRY

Brady's vibrant watercolor *Last Red Tulips* provides an excellent introduction to this unit on poetry. Visual art, like literature, can be a poetic expression of feelings and experiences. Furthermore, both artwork and literature can evoke visual images. In fact, Brady's imagist technique parallels the technique of many poets. Her attempts to capture images frozen at a moment recalls Ezra Pound's definition of a poem as an image captured in time.

**Imagery** is only one of the poetic devices that students will be studying in this unit. They will also see how various elements, such as the **speaker**, **diction**, **figurative language**, **sound**, **structure**, and **tone**, contribute to the overall purpose and effect of the different types of poetry (lyric, narrative, dramatic).

Anthologies of poetry should be available to students in the classroom or library, and students should be encouraged to browse freely to see how poets use **imagery** and other techniques to express emotion and experience. Students may begin collecting poems for a personal scrapbook or for sharing in class. Students could collect poems that have special appeal to them, or they could collect poems on a particular subject or theme. Some students might want to arrange their poems according to categories and illustrate them, thus creating their own anthologies.

*Last Red Tulips* (1984) by Carolyn Brady (1937– ). Watercolor.  
Worcester Art Museum

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

You might ask students why people enjoy solving mysteries and riddles. Point out that close reading of poetry is similar to solving a puzzle; the “answer” is a greater understanding of the entire poem.

## UNIT INTRODUCTION

1

Many believe that success of a poem is measured more by feelings evoked in reader than by those originally felt by poet.

2

According to Robert Frost, a poem should “begin in delight and end in wisdom.”

## CLOSE READING OF A POEM

1

Poetry is intense and condensed, often saying more in fewer words.

2

Sound is an integral part of poem’s overall meaning and effect.

3

Root meaning of *explicate* is “to unfold”; to explicate a poem is to unfold or reveal its meaning.

## PRESENTATION

After reading the poem aloud, ask students to draw their own conclusions by paraphrasing the poem in their own words. Help students analyze the poem’s meaning by pointing out that this poem is famous for its exact observation of a bird

and by asking them to explain what the observer relates about the bird’s appearance and behavior. Explain that the **Explication** represents only one reader’s interpretation; then encourage them to offer their own observations and conclusions.

We live in a fast-moving age that often forces us to move fast, too. It is the age of “speed-reading,” and students are frequently encouraged to read quickly so they can take in large amounts of information in a short time. Many ads and articles are written in simple, stripped-down form so they can be read and digested swiftly. But poetry is a different kind of writing and demands a different kind of reading—reading that is more leisurely, more personal. A poem is not read like a newspaper, for quick information, but rather for an emotional and thought-provoking experience.

## CLOSE READING OF A POEM

### Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

1 To experience a poem fully is to be aware of its special language and structure. Poets rely on the suggestive powers of language and choose words for their connotative as well as their denotative values. Through imagery, figurative language, and symbols, poets appeal

to both the intellect and the senses. The meaning of a poem is conveyed not only through its words but through its sounds. To intensify meaning, poets choose patterns of sound, including rhyme and rhythm. Poets achieve their effects, also, through special kinds of organization, in structures called stanzas, and in conventional forms such as sonnets and ballads.

2 It is a good idea to read a poem several times, and aloud at least once. Read slowly and distinctly, paying attention to meaning as well as to sound. Often it is helpful to write a prose paraphrase of a poem, restating all its ideas in plain language. A paraphrase is no substitute for the “meaning” of a poem, but it helps you clarify and simplify the author’s text.

3 Read the following poem several times. Then turn to the explication on page 295. An *explication* is a line-by-line examination of the content and technique of a work.



Remind students, however, that they must support their assertions with evidence from the poem.

## A Bird Came Down the Walk

EMILY DICKINSON

4	A bird came down the walk: He did not know I saw; He bit an angleworm <sup>o</sup> in halves And ate the fellow, raw.	
5	And then he drank a dew From a convenient grass, And then hopped sidewise to the wall To let a beetle pass.	5
	He glanced with rapid eyes That hurried all abroad—	
6	They looked like frightened beads, I thought. He stirred his velvet head	10
7	Like one in danger; cautious, I offered him a crumb,	
8	And he unrolled his feathers And rowed him softer home	15
9	Than oars divide the ocean, Too silver for a seam, Or butterflies, off banks of noon, Leap, plashless, <sup>o</sup> as they swim.	20

3. **angleworm**: earthworm. 20. **plashless**: without a splash.

### Explication

In “A Bird Came Down the Walk,” Emily Dickinson implies that there is no mutual sympathy or concern between the natural world and the human world. While the speaker is extremely responsive to the natural world, attentive to the creatures in the garden and sensitive to the bird’s fear, the bird is indifferent to the speaker’s feelings. The presence of a human being in the garden is not only of no consequence, but is felt instinctively to be an alien element.

**4** Underscores contrast between observer’s curiosity about bird and bird’s indifference to her presence.

**5** Dickinson’s detailed observation of bird’s actions conveys sensitivity to natural world.

**6** **Simile.** Comparison of bird’s eyes to “frightened beads” suggests the bird’s cautious, fearful view of human world.

**7** Description of bird’s movement underscores his fear of humans.

**8** **Metaphor.** Describes bird’s “feathers” or wings in terms of “oars” that row him softly, implying a fluidity of motion.

**9** Images in last stanza emphasize harmony bird has with rest of nature, a harmony speaker cannot attain.

10

Bird's violence toward angleworm and his superficial courtesy to beetle indicate matter-of-fact nature of relationships in animal world.

11

Change from the true rhyme of earlier stanzas to approximate rhyme (*abroad, head*) suggests bird's world has been endangered, imbalanced.

12

Comparison between flying in air and rowing through ocean emphasizes bird's harmony with nature.

13

Liquid mercury is a poisonous metallic element, the beauty and danger of which are suggestive of the combined beauty and violence of nature, symbolized by the bird.

10

In the opening stanza the speaker observes the movements of a bird closely and quietly. At first, the bird is not aware of being watched (line 2). Unlike the observer, who has affection for natural creatures, the bird has a matter-of-fact attitude toward nature. He wastes no time cutting the angleworm in half and swallowing it "raw." He uses a "convenient" grass—whatever is at hand—to refresh himself with the dew that has condensed from the night air. Since the beetle is of no practical interest, he hops lightly out of its way.

In the third stanza, the speaker conveys the bird's wariness. Lines 9–10 give us an effective image of the bird's extreme caution:

11

He glanced with rapid eyes  
That hurried all abroad—

These lines show us the bird's eyes taking in the scene around him swiftly. We can see the small dark eyes of the bird, which are compared to "frightened beads," filled with fear.

The sentence beginning in the last line of stanza 3 and running over into stanza 4 describes the bird's head. The speaker compares its softness to "velvet" and again emphasizes the bird's sense of danger.

Now the speaker tries to approach the bird, offering to feed him without success. The last six lines of the poem use original metaphors to describe the flight of the bird. The words "he unrolled his feathers" tell that the bird began to fly. Although birds do not literally unroll their feathers, this metaphor is highly effective in suggesting the way a bird's wings open out and extend in flight. The last five lines show the bird moving through the air. The comparisons stress the softness and smoothness of the bird's flight. The movement of the bird's wings is compared to oars parting the water. The lines

12

And rowed him softer home

Than oars divide the ocean,  
Too silver for a seam,

suggest that the bird does not disturb the air, the natural element in which it moves. As the oars of a boat part the water ("divide the ocean"), the water immediately reunites so that there is no line or mark ("seam"). The word *silver* seems to refer to *quicksilver*, or liquid mercury. If it is divided, the two parts immediately come together without a seam.

The softness and smoothness of the bird's movements are also con-

13

veyed by the sounds in lines 15–18. The alliteration of softer, silver, and seam, and the subtle repetition of the soft consonant sounds *f*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, and *v* (*And, unrolled, feathers, And, rowed, him, softer, home, Than, oars, divide, ocean, silver, for, seam*) make the lines flow smoothly. The assonance of long *o*'s in *unrolled, rowed, home, and ocean* is not just melodious; the repetition of the long vowel tends to slow up the lines, to emphasize the grace and control of the bird's flight.

In the final two lines, the bird's movement is compared to that of butterflies. Butterflies don't swim, but the lines suggest that they glide through the air as easily as fish move through the water. A *bank* is a stretch of land at the edge of a river or stream. The "banks of noon" suggest the butterflies springing into the warm air without the slightest noise ("plashless").

The imagery of the poem is quite wonderful. The picture of the bird with eyes "like frightened beads," rowing itself home soundlessly through the air, lingers in the memory as does the image of butterflies leaping off imaginary banks as they "swim" in the warm, midday air. By the power of her observation and imagination, Dickinson transforms a rather ordinary occurrence into something extraordinary and memorable.

## Guidelines for Reading a Poem

1. Read the poem several times, and aloud at least once, trying to follow the thought. Commas, semicolons, colons, dashes, and periods tell you where to pause. The reader is not expected to pause automatically at the end of each line. Sometimes a complete thought runs over into a new stanza. In some lines more than one pause may be signaled.
2. Be alert to key words and references. In poetry, a word is often used in an unfamiliar or unusual way. The word *silver*, for example, is not the precious metal used for jewelry and tableware; it stands for *quicksilver*, another name for mercury.
3. Write a paraphrase of any lines that need clarification or simplification. A paraphrase helps a reader understand figurative language. For example, one paraphrase of lines 15–18 might read: The bird spread out his wings and began flying home. His wings moved through the air more smoothly than oars cleave the ocean, the water parting and reuniting without appearing to be disturbed.
4. Arrive at the central idea or meaning of the poem. Try to state this idea in one or two sentences: "A Bird Came Down the Walk" reveals how much wonder a sensitive observer can find in simple, common aspects of nature.

common  
misstate

14 Sound devices contribute to meaning of poem.

15 *Bank* also suggests tilting motion of flight of bird or of butterflies.

## READING A POEM

1. By paying attention to punctuation and not stopping at end of each line, readers can emphasize meaning and avoid a "sing-song" effect. Commas require only a slight pause, whereas semicolons, colons, dashes, and periods require longer pauses.

2. Diction, or word choice, is crucial to poetry. Poets achieve compression by using words that suggest two or more relevant meanings or by choosing words for their connotations, or suggested meanings, as well as their denotations, or dictionary definitions.

3. A paraphrase expresses literal meaning of a poem, which must be understood before figurative and symbolic meanings can be explored.

4. Stated theme must not contradict any aspect of poem; however, poem may contain multiple themes or one theme that is stated in various ways.





## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the roles of the **speakers** in two poems. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on text p. 299 focuses on relating word origins to present-day meanings.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to explain the meaning of the adage "You can't judge a book by its cover" when it is applied to a person. Suggest to students that as they read Graves's poem they consider how the speaker illustrates this adage.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section emphasizes that readers of poetry should not always assume the **speaker** is the poet. Poets experiment with different perspectives, disguises, or ways of looking at the world. Tell students that in the next two poems the speaker is someone or something other than the poet.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read the poems, margin annotations will aid your discussion of the **speakers** in the poems.

### The Face in the Mirror

1

**Diction.** Concrete, evocative words ("haunted," "glaring," "uneven") suggest character of speaker.

2

**Why does one brow droop? What does this suggest about how his features have been formed?** Droops because of a war wound. Suggests face and appearance result from experiences in a long life.

3

**Description.** Details reveal a battered and aging but strong and determined man.

4

The **speaker** may be the "mirrored man" himself or the inner person who cannot be reflected outwardly.

5

An ironic contrast exists between "boy's presumption" and aged appearance.

6

**Symbol.** "Queen in her high silk pavilion" symbolizes beauty, grace, romantic spirit—ideals still sought after by speaker.

## THE SPEAKER

The poet Robert Frost once said that a poem is "spoken by a person in a scene—in character, in a setting." This person, or *speaker*, is often simply the poet, but may be someone or something altogether different from the poet. Through the ages, poets have delighted in disguising their voices, like actors, and speaking as characters.

One aid to understanding a poem is to identify its speaker. Your knowledge of who or what the speaker is will help you understand other things about the poem: where and when the poem is set, what situation it describes, what story it tells.

## The Face in the Mirror

### ROBERT GRAVES

*This poem is a self-portrait. What is the speaker's attitude toward his own face? How do you know that he regards himself ironically?*

- 1 Gray haunted eyes, absentmindedly glaring  
2 From wide, uneven orbits; one brow drooping  
Somewhat over the eye  
Because of a missile fragment still inhering,<<sup>o</sup>  
Skin deep, as a foolish record of old-world fighting. 5
- 3 Crookedly broken nose—low tackling caused it;  
Cheeks, furrowed; coarse gray hair, flying frenetic;  
Forehead, wrinkled and high;  
Jowls, prominent; ears, large; jaw, pugilistic;<sup>o</sup>  
Teeth, few; lips, full and ruddy; mouth ascetic.<sup>o</sup> 10
- I pause with razor poised, scowling derision  
4 At the mirrored man whose beard needs my attention,  
And once more ask him why  
5 He still stands ready, with a boy's presumption,  
6 To court the queen in her high silk pavilion. 15

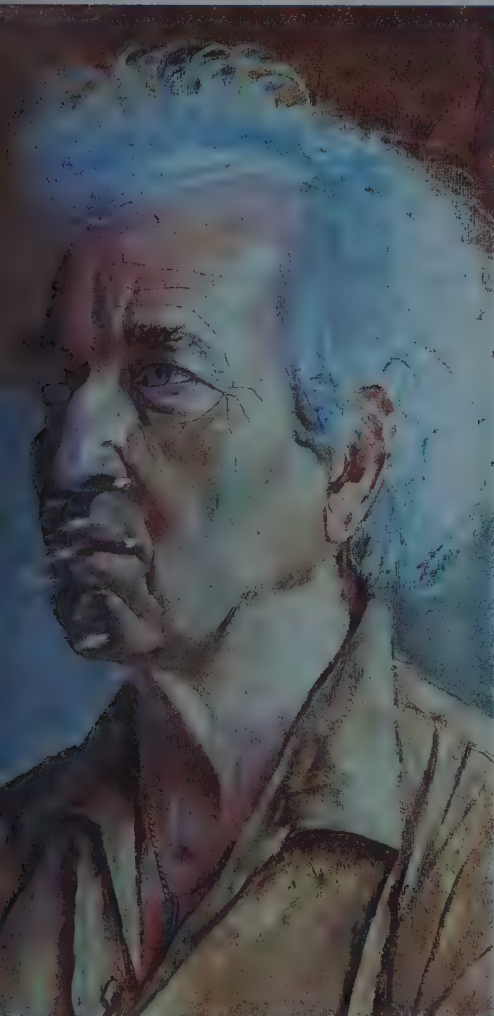
4. **inhering** (in-hir'əng): remaining fixed. 9. **pugilistic** (pyoo'jə-lis'tik): like a fighter.  
10. **ascetic** (ə-sēt'ik): severe.

## PRESENTATION

Writers often use mirrors as a vehicle for portraying dualities. In "The Face in the Mirror," the mirror allows the **speaker** to contrast his outer appearance with his inner feelings, a contrast with which students can readily identify.

Some interpretations of this poem allow for two speakers—an omniscient mirror and the man looking into it. You may wish to consider the interpretation that there is only one speaker. In this view, the poet looks in the mirror, describes what he sees, and then expresses his

amazement at the contrast between his inner and outer selves.



## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. In the first two stanzas of the poem, Graves gives us a detailed description of his face.
  - a. What do these details reveal about his past?
  - b. Would you call this portrait realistic or idealistic? Explain.
2. In line 12 Graves refers to his reflection as "the mirrored man." Why do you suppose he views this image with ridicule, "scowling derision"?
3. Consider the last two lines of the poem. "To court the queen in her high pavilion" suggests an episode from the age of chivalry.
  - a. What do you think Graves means by "a boy's presumption"?
  - b. How do you know that he has not been disillusioned by his experiences or by the ravages of time?
  - c. What evidence is there that the "inner man" is different from the image in the mirror?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Learning Word Origins

The word *pavilion* in Graves's poem refers to a large, ornate tent such as those shown in illustrations of knights' tournaments during the Middle Ages. The word can be traced through French to the Latin word *papilio*, meaning "butterfly." The pavilion received its name because it resembled the wings of a butterfly.

- In a dictionary find the origin of the words
- 1 *ascetic* and *pugilistic*. What are their derivations? Can you see how these words came to have their present-day meanings?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Robert Graves's poetic self-portrait vividly recreates his physical appearance as shown in this picture. Particularly noticeable are "haunted" and "glaring" eyes, crooked nose, "furrowed" cheeks, and coarse, flyaway gray hair.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Speaker's life has been "haunted" with unhappiness, as in his injuries in war and while playing football. 1b. Realistic because of unflattering details of face.
2. Graves could be scowling at imperfections of his actual experience or at fact that his older, rugged appearance does not reflect his inner youth and optimism.
- 3a. Phrase suggests youthful daring and impetuous self-confidence. 3b. Speaker retains a youthful, romantic outlook. 3c. Description in first two stanzas focuses on unflattering physical details; last stanza reveals feelings that are youthful, idealistic, and romantic.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Ascetic*: from Greek *askein* ("to work" or "to exercise"), means "practicing self-denial as a measure of discipline."  
*Pugilistic*: from Greek *pygme* ("fist"), means "like a fighter, especially a boxer."
2. Responses will vary. Students should consider idea of discipline in relation to work and exercise and the role of the fist in boxing.

## PRESENTATION

Before assigning Shelley's poem, have students make a list of the beneficial and harmful effects of nature. While Shelley's poem is relatively straightforward, you may need to explain that by giving the cloud wings (l. 5), Shelley likens it to a

bird. This suggests that the cloud goes where it wishes and is not a servant of the wind. You may also need to point out that in l. 7, the budding plants' mother is the earth, who "dances" (revolves) around the sun. Also, emphasize abrupt change in **tone** in ll. 9–12. Explain that the first

eight lines depict a loving, beneficent cloud; the later lines portray a cloud that laughs at the threat it poses to nature. From another perspective, the cloud may be neither loving nor menacing, but simply indifferent to the effects of its power.

## The Cloud

**1**  
The **speaker** is immediately established as personified cloud.

**2**  
**Rhyme.** Shelley's use of **internal rhyme** in every odd-numbered line and **end rhyme** in even-numbered lines unifies poem.

**3**  
**Who is the "mother"?** Mother Earth.

**4**  
In last four lines, poem's mood darkens as cloud conveys contemptuous attitude toward earth.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1.** Personification of cloud enables cloud to detail causes and effects of its positive actions (providing rain to flowers, shade to leaves, dew to buds) and negative actions (storms), thus giving them purpose and meaning.

**2.** Love and sympathy in providing rain for flowers; protective concern in giving shade to leaves; joy in awakening buds; power, indifference, and cruelty in hail and thunder.

## CREATIVE WRITING

Students should include details that describe what their speakers see, feel, taste, touch, and smell. This exercise may be adapted for oral interpretation.

# FROM The Cloud

**PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY**

*It is not at all unusual for poets to personify the natural world—to describe a natural force as though it possessed human qualities. This is Shelley's method in "The Cloud." As you read the following stanza from the poem, determine what kind of personality Shelley has given the speaker.*

- 1** I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
- 2** From the seas and the streams;  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noonday dreams.  
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,
- 3** When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.
- 4** I wield the flail<sup>o</sup> of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

5

10

**9. flail:** a tool with a free-swinging stick, used to thresh grain.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

- 1.** The point of view of this poem is that of the cloud, which relates its different functions. How does Shelley attribute purpose and meaning to these actions?
- 2.** Like the other great Romantic poets of the nineteenth century, Shelley loved nature and was able in his poetry to capture the tumultuous power of the wind and the sea. What characteristics does he attribute to the cloud?

## Creative Writing

### ► Creating a Speaker

Write a brief paragraph in which the speaker is something that does not really talk: an animal, a building, a school desk, or a street. Try to make your language appropriate to your speaker.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 31 / Selection Test 31*



## CLOSURE

Have students explain the difference between the **speakers** in the two poems they have just read (the speaker in "The Face in the Mirror" is a person; the speaker in "The Cloud" is a personified cloud).

## ACHIEVEMENTS: READING

Some students may enjoy reading Graves's description of his face in the first chapter of his autobiography *Good-bye to All That* (1930) and comparing it to his poem. Other students may like to draw, sculpt, or paint Graves, based on

the description in the poem.

Ask students to read and discuss other poems with unusual speakers, such as Sylvia Plath's "Mirror" and E. E. Cummings' "I am a little church no great cathedral."

## About the Authors

### Robert Graves (1895–1985)

Robert Graves was born in Wimbledon near London. During World War I he served in a regiment of the Royal Welch Fusiliers. He was wounded in action and later suffered shell shock. After the war he studied at Oxford. Graves became a prolific poet who experimented with a wide variety of verse forms. Apart from poetry, he wrote critical essays, translations, mythological studies, and historical novels.

### Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822)



In his "Ode to the West Wind," Shelley describes himself as "tameless, and swift, and proud." By the standards of his own day, his life was highly unconventional. He produced his greatest poetry while he was living in Italy with his wife, Mary Shelley. Among his best-known poems are "Ode to a Skylark," "Ode to the West Wind," *Adonais*, and *Prometheus Unbound*. Shortly before his thirtieth birthday, he was drowned in a boating accident when he was swept overboard during a storm.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

#### Robert Graves

Graves's poetry combines his attraction to the emotional and mystical with his adept use of sound devices. "The Face in the Mirror" is based on his experiences in war. He fought in the trenches in World War I in northern France. On the Somme River, he was hit by fragments of an eight-inch shell and nearly blinded by a fragment that lodged under his right eyebrow. Hit also in the thigh and lung, he was reported as dead and later joked dryly about reading his obituary. This war experience and others resulted in nightmares and hallucinations suggested in his poem.

#### Percy Bysshe Shelley

One of the greatest of Romantic poets, Shelley suffered separation from his children and much criticism because of his estrangement from his first wife, Harriet. However, he found a congenial spirit in his second wife, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. Shelley believed deeply in progress and perfectibility of humanity. He was idealistic and generous, once giving his shoes to someone who needed them badly. He shared a deep friendship with the poet Lord Byron (George Gordon) and was carrying a volume of poetry by John Keats in his pocket when he drowned.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the role of **diction** in conveying the meaning of a poem. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** in the *Teacher's Manual* (p. 167) will give students practice in determining the **connotations** of words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Have students find pictures of sports figures, ships, and people who appear to be dreaming of or longing for something or someone. Ask students what words they might use to describe these pictures.

### PREREADING FOCUS

Encourage students to consider how the **diction** of poetry differs from that of prose. The introduction to this section emphasizes that the diction of poetry is precise and concrete, and that it may be formal or informal. Ask students to read the following three poems to determine which has the most formal diction and which has the least formal diction.

### USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read the poems in this section, margin annotations will aid your analysis of diction and other literary elements in the selections.

#### To Satch

1

Speaker, in this case, is Satchel Paige himself.

2

Lines 1–2 refer to Satchel Paige's incredibly long pitching career—from the 1920s to 1965 (when he was nearly 60).

3

**Diction.** Dialectal spellings and clipping of words indicate diction that is very informal and reflects the way Satch would have spoken.

4

**How does "Satch" picture himself? What attitude does he convey?** Pictures himself forever pitching his famous fastballs, conveying confidence and humor.

5

**Tone.** Satch's humor indicates that he knows God will approve.

Purpose?  
Feeling/mood  
to be  
concrete

0 - Diction/Dialect/Format...  
1 - who's speaking  
2 - point out dialect  
3 - make a difference?

## DICTION

In their diction, or choice of words, poets aim for clearness and effectiveness. They often prefer a concrete word to an abstract word. In "The Face in the Mirror," Graves's diction is precise: instead of using the word *looking* in line 1, he uses *glaring*. Note also the specific modifiers he uses for each of his features in stanza 2.

Poets also choose words that arouse particular sensations or moods. There would be a far different effect in line 2 of "The Cloud" if Shelley had written "bodies of salt water" instead of *seas*, or "small rivers" instead of *streams*.

The diction of a poem may be formal and even elegant, or it may be informal to the point of being slangy. You will find that poets choose their words carefully in order to control the reader's response.

## To Satch

SAMUEL ALLEN (PAUL VESEY)

*The "Satch" to whom this poem is dedicated was the phenomenal baseball pitcher Satchel Paige. Paige was one of the "iron men" of baseball. He was still pitching in the major leagues when most men his age had long retired from baseball. He was as well known for his sense of humor as for his genius with the change-up pitch.*

1 Sometimes I feel like I will *never* stop

2 Just go on forever

3 'Til one fine mornin'

I'm gonna reach up and grab me a handfulla stars

4 Swing out my long lean leg

And whip three hot strikes burnin' down the heavens

And look over at God and say

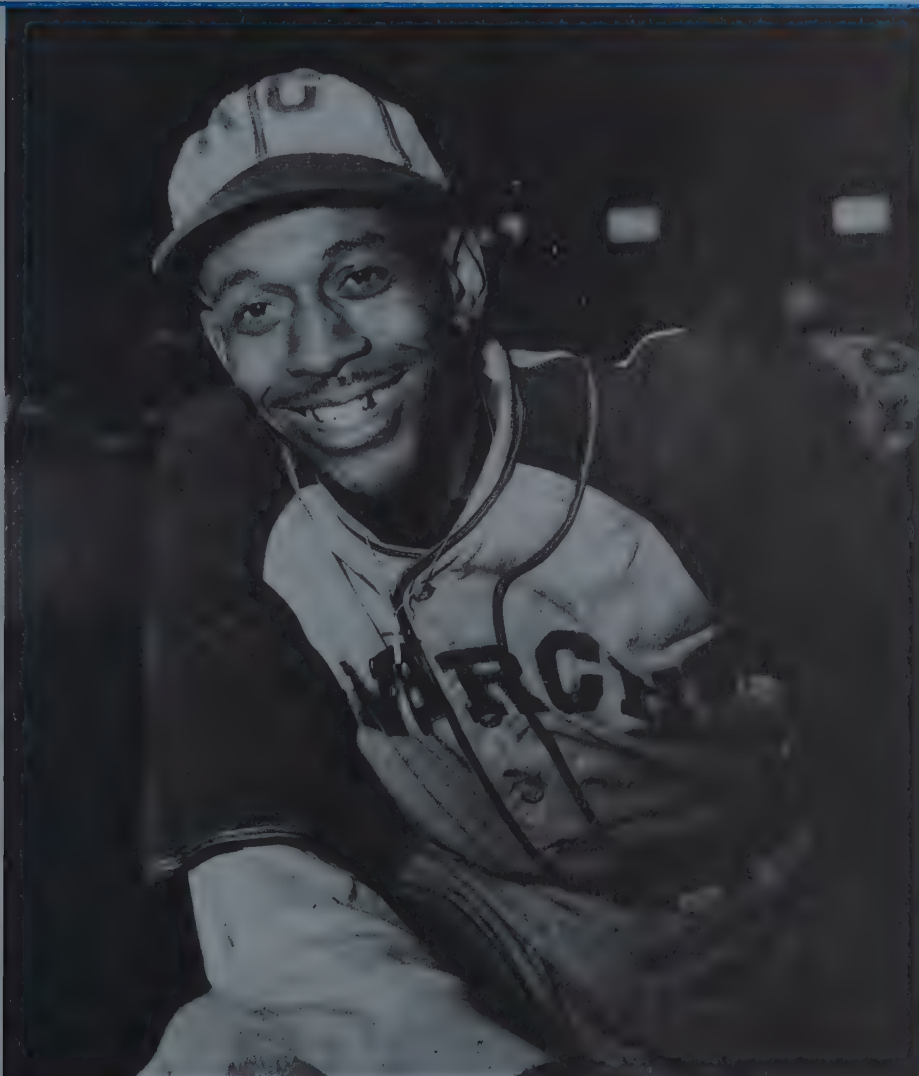
5 How about that!



## PRESENTATION

Read the poem aloud, emphasizing the speaker's use of **dialect** and slang. Define these types of language for your students and ask them to point out examples in the poem. You may even have students bring to class other poems or

sports columns with examples of slang, **dialect**, and colorful **diction**.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

A look of pleased confidence on his face, Satchel Paige projects in this photograph the sense of humor reflected in the poem. Leroy (Satchel) Paige (1906?–1982) was one of the first black baseball players in the major leagues. As a child, he tossed stones at tin cans and played sandlot ball in Mobile, Alabama, where he was born. He played with all-black teams from the 1920s until 1948, when he made his major-league debut with the Cleveland Indians, two years after Jackie Robinson broke the racial barrier in baseball. Famed for his fastball, his assortment of curveballs, his “hesitation” pitch, and his control, Paige is a popular folk hero of baseball. “Satch” is a short version of his nickname “Satchelfoot,” a reference to his large feet.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Satch. 1b. From use of first-person pronouns and what speaker says about himself.

2a. Says he feels he will never stop, and describes his own pitching enthusiastically and enjoyably. 2b. His remark to God shows humor.

3. Reflects way speaker would really talk and his sense of humor.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. Who is the speaker of this poem?

b. How do you know?

2a. How does the speaker reveal confidence in

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 32 / Selection Test 32

his abilities? b. How does he also reveal a sense of humor?

3. This poem makes use of dialect, slang, and lively expressions. How is this language appropriate to the subject?

— Switch to formal,  
see if it sounds  
OK.



## PRESENTATION

Encourage students to contribute pertinent facts from their social studies classes and to bring relevant maps and pictures to aid in answering the first three For Study and Discussion questions.

## Cargoes

1

**Connotation.** Names have romantic connotations of wonder and beauty of faraway places.

2

Ships carry things of beauty and pleasure, not necessities.

3

Cargo is rich jewels, an exotic spice, and gold coins—again, luxuries, not necessities.

4

**Alliteration.** Poet's use of harsh alliterative sounds suggests unpleasant, unromantic reality of modern times.

5

**What is the British coaster's cargo? How does this cargo differ from the others?** Cargo is coal, road rails, pig lead, firewood, ironware, tin trays, all necessities for industrialized society, not luxuries.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Stanza 2 recalls period of Spanish exploration and conquest—sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Stanza 3 is about British coaster (cargo ship that stays near coasts) of twentieth century.

2. First two travel to exotic places; they "row" and "dip"; third plies local trade routes and "butts."

3a. Third ship carries raw materials for modern industry and manufactured products. 3b. Past exotic, romantic in contrast to uglier, realistic present.

4a. Attitude is negative: images and language are vividly harsh.

4b. Words are *dirty*, *salt-caked*, *pig lead*, and *cheap*.

You may want to discuss the fourth question in detail, pointing out that the words *dirty*, *salt-caked*, *pig lead*, and *cheap* are examples of the realistic language that Masefield frequently uses. One interpretation of Masefield's attitude is that he finds the modern coaster ugly and utilitarian

and longs for the rich romance of the old ships (even though he must have known their cargoes were also sometimes plundered goods, rotting food, or suffering slaves). Another interpretation is that Masefield respects the rugged persistence shown by the coaster.

## Cargoes

JOHN MASEFIELD

*The English poet John Masefield is best known for his poems about the sea, and the following poem is one of his most famous. Do not be put off by the strange words in the opening line: a quinquireme (kwīn'kwī-rēm') was a galley ship of olden times; Nineveh (nī'nə-və), the galley's home port, was a city of ancient Assyria (ə-sīr'ē-ə); and Ophir (ō'fər) was a Biblical land famed for its great stores of gold.*

- 1 Quinquireme of Nineveh from distant Ophir,  
Rowing home to haven in sunny Palestine,
- 2 With a cargo of ivory,  
And apes and peacocks,  
Sandalwood, cedarwood, and sweet white wine.

Stately Spanish galleon coming from the Isthmus,<sup>5</sup>  
Dipping through the Tropics by the palm-green shores,

- 3 With a cargo of diamonds,  
Emeralds, amethysts,  
Topazes, and cinnamon, and gold moidores.<sup>10</sup>

- 4 Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smokestack,  
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,

- 5 With a cargo of Tyne coal,<sup>13</sup>  
Road rails, pig lead,  
Firewood, ironware, and cheap tin trays.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Each stanza of this poem describes a ship from a different period in history. The ship in stanza 1 is from Biblical times. Identify the historical periods in stanzas 2 and 3.
2. Compare the first two lines of each stanza which describe the ships' movements and locations. What differences do you find between the first two ships and the third one?

3. The cargoes of the first two ships are exotic, rich, and colorful. **a.** How do they differ from the cargo of the third ship? **b.** What is this poem implying about the differences between past times and modern times?

4. The poet's attitude toward each ship is different. **a.** How would you describe the poet's attitude toward the third ship and its cargo? **b.** Which words in the last stanza lead you to think so?

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 32 / Selection Test 32*

You may also want to point out the lack of complete sentences in the poem. Each stanza includes only a subject with various modifiers, carefully patterned and highly descriptive. You may want to compare each stanza to a picture of a ship.

- ① can show the change in times, from glory to garbage  
 ② can be implying that the dirtiest, frowned upon cargo is really the most necessary one.



The Fleet of Pedro Alvares Cabral from a sixteenth-century Portuguese manuscript.

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## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Connotative Meanings

A word can have **denotative** and **connotative** meanings. **Denotation** is a word's literal, "dictionary" meaning. For example, the word *springtime* denotes the season between winter and summer. **Connotations** are the additional meanings a word gains because of its associations. *Springtime* has connotations of youth, rebirth, and romance.

A poet may draw on a word's connotations to arouse a special feeling in the reader. Each stanza of "Cargoes" ends with a list of things one of the ships carries. What connotations do the words in each list have? Suppose that line 3 read: "With a cargo of dead elephants' tusks"

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on p. 209.

instead of "With a cargo of ivory." In what way would the effect of the line be different?

## Creative Writing

### ► Describing a Modern Cargo

Imagine a modern cargo carried by modern means, such as a truck, train, or airplane. Write a short essay describing such a cargo, using words whose connotations reveal your attitude toward the cargo. For example, a truck full of poultry might be described as "a gleaming van full of fine, fat fowls," or as "a clattering old wreck with crates of half-dead chickens." If you like, try to write a fourth stanza to Masfield's poem, describing the kind of cargo a ship might carry today.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

In 1500, the Portuguese explorer Cabral sailed for the East Indies but reached the coast of Brazil, which he claimed for his king. Thus, his expedition and ships, pictured here, are from the same period described in the second stanza of Masfield's poem.

#### Relating Expression Skills

Students may want to draw or make models of ships from the various times and places alluded to in Masfield's poem—galley ships of Biblical times, Cabral's ships, Spanish galleons, and British coasters.

### LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. Lists in first two stanzas connote beauty, wonder, romance; list in last stanza connotes ugly reality.
2. Altered line suggests ugly reality rather than romantic beauty.

### CREATIVE WRITING

Possible topics include a truck filled with today's newspapers, an ice-cream vendor's cart, a tractor-trailer load of new cars (or old wrecks on the way to a dump), a plane with cargo of food and clothes for earthquake victims, a van of horses headed for a rodeo.

## PRESENTATION

Begin by focusing on the title of the poem. Discuss the dream referred to in the poem, perhaps relating it to students' own dreams. Guide students to the realization that Hughes is referring to the dream of real freedom for black people.

Explain that *defer* means not only "to postpone" but also "to submit," and ask students to discuss the implications of the deferred dream. You may wish to read part of Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech aloud to students. Is the dream fulfilled today or still deferred?

Students might discuss or act out each image in the poem: giving up hope (ll. 2–3); becoming bitter and hateful (ll. 4–5); causing trouble for others or acting superficially kind (ll. 6–8); being worn out (ll. 9–10); rebelling (l. 11).

### Dream Deferred

1

The poem's series of questions suggests speaker has no definitive solutions to his frustration.

2

*To what is the dream compared in l. 3? What does this simile suggest?* Comparison to a raisin suggests dream withers, shrivels.

3

**Simile.** Comparisons of deferred dream to "rotten meat" and overly sweet dessert strongly reinforce the speaker's bitter and angry attitude expressed in the other similes in the poem.

4

Final question, emphasized by italics, suggests deferred dream may result in violence.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Ideas for Writing

Before discussing this photograph with your students, ask them to identify its major images and write a brief story about what the young person may be thinking and feeling.

#### Exploring the Subject

This photograph juxtaposes two strong visual images—an iron fence, suggestive of a barrier, and a young person peering through it at an inaccessible world. These images suggest the isolation and separation from the American dream that Hughes explores in his poem.

# Dream Deferred

LANGSTON HUGHES

*A deferred dream is one that has been delayed or put off. What do you think the poet means by the word dream?*

1 What happens to a dream deferred?

2 Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—  
And then run?

3 Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over—  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

5

4 Or does it explode?

10





### CLOSURE

Ask students to identify, explain, and recall examples of kinds of diction (formal language, informal language, slang, dialect, connotation).

### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ask students to rewrite the poems in this section using a different kind of diction or theme—"To Satch" in formal language, "Cargoes" in language with opposite connotations, or "Dream Deferred" as "Dream Fulfilled."

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Hughes's poem is organized as a series of questions. In lines 2–10 the questions are phrased as comparisons. How does this approach immediately engage your interest?

2a. What words does the poet use that have unpleasant connotations? b. Why is this language effective? c. How would you describe the speaker's emotions?

## Writing About Literature

### Analyzing Diction

Compare the diction in "Dream Deferred" with the diction of "Cargoes" (page 304). How would you characterize the diction in each poem? How is the diction of each poem suited to its subject? In your composition, cite examples that illustrate your point.

## About the Authors

### Samuel Allen (1917– )

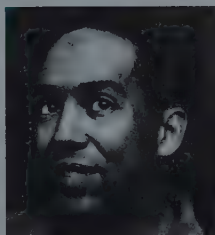
Samuel Allen was born in Columbus, Ohio. He attended Fisk University and Harvard, then continued his studies at the Sorbonne in Paris. Some of his early poems were published by Richard Wright, who was then living in Paris. In 1956, an edition of Allen's poems was published in Germany in both German and English. Allen's poetry has appeared in *American Negro Poetry*, *New Negro Poets: U.S.A.*, and other publications. He sometimes uses the pseudonym "Paul Vesey."

### John Masefield (1878–1967)



John Masefield was born in England. At the age of fourteen he ran away to sea. Three years later, when his ship docked in New York, he decided to live for a while in America. He supported himself through a variety of jobs: working in a bakery, a livery stable, a saloon, and a carpet mill. The sights he had seen and the experiences he had undergone made him want to read and write poetry, so during his stay in America, he eagerly read all the great English poets. He returned to England and worked for a time as a newspaperman, and, in 1902, he published his first book of poems, *Salt Water Ballads*. In addition to poetry he wrote dramas, such as *The Tragedy of Pompey the Great*, and novels, such as *Lost Endeavor*. In 1930, John Masefield was made Poet Laureate of England.

### Langston Hughes (1902–1967)



Langston Hughes began traveling at the age of fourteen. He went to Mexico and then New York City, where he attended Columbia University for a year. He signed on as a crew member of a steamer and spent two years working his way around Africa and Europe. For his poetry, Hughes drew on modern folk and jazz rhythms, the kind of speech and music he heard in the black community. Hughes's work, down-to-earth and realistic, pointed the way to a new, distinctly American kind of poetry.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Reader expects answers to colorful questions.

2a. Dry, fester, sore, run, rotten, crust, sags, heavy, load, explode.

2b. It expresses concretely speaker's rage and frustration.

2c. Frustrated, bitter, angry.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### Samuel Allen

Strongly influenced by the Harlem Renaissance poets, Allen is a lawyer, poet, professor, and critic of Afro-American literature who uses the pseudonym "Paul Vesey" to keep his vocations separate. Strongly rooted in the black folk heritage, his poems are often dramatic monologues, such as "To Satch."

### John Masefield

Orphaned at the age of nine, Masefield joined a merchant navy school ship and rose to senior petty officer before being released due to his health. After spending time in New York, he returned to Britain, where he met Irish dramatists William Butler Yeats and John Millington Synge, who influenced his poetry and his verse plays. The poem that won his laureateship was *Reynard the Fox*, a sympathetic celebration of English rural life.

### Langston Hughes

Born in Joplin, Missouri, Hughes was a leader in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. His racially conscious poems explore almost every aspect of black experience. He is often referred to as the poet laureate of black people.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the use of **imagery** in "The Cat and the Wind," "The Meadow Mouse," "The Fawn," "Empty House," and "The Space." For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 311 will give students practice defining words by identifying prefixes and suffixes.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Write on the board *wind, cat, mouse, forest, desert, and empty house*. Ask students to describe each noun by creating images that appeal to the five senses.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section emphasizes that **imagery** is an element through which the poet creates pictures and imagined sensations in the thoughts of the reader. Tell students to look for imagery of sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell in the poems in this section.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read the poems, you may use the margin annotations to guide analysis and discussion of **imagery**.

## The Cat and the Wind

**1** Wind is "small," just forceful enough to move things slightly. Possibly an autumn gust because of crackling sound in l. 6.

**2** *Why does the cat cock her ears? Why does she retain this stance to the end?* She is cautious and puzzled by all the sounds she hears. Remains unable to decide what to attack.

**3** **Imagery.** "Rustling" and "crackling" appeal to sense of hearing; pupils dwindling "to specks in her yellow eyes" appeals to sense of sight.

**4** **Diction.** "Orchestrated" creates a precise and concrete image of natural elements coming "all together" as if conducted by the wind.

# IMAGERY

Although we do a great deal of our thinking with words, many of our thoughts come to us as pictures or as imagined sensations. For instance, if you think about riding a roller coaster, you may see a picture of long tracks stretching down before you, and imagine a lurching feeling in the pit of your stomach. Such imagined pictures or sensations are called *images*.

Poets attempt to share their experiences with us by appealing to our imaginations. One way in which a poet makes an experience seem real, vivid, and fresh to us is through the skillful use of *imagery*.

# The Cat and the Wind

THOM GUNN

*Images can appeal to all our senses. To which senses does Gunn appeal in this poem?*

- 1** A small wind  
blows across the hedge  
into the yard.
- 2** The cat cocks her ears
- 3** —multitudinous<sup>5</sup> rustling  
and crackling all around—  
her pupils dwindle  
to specks  
in her yellow eyes  
that stare first upward  
and then on every side  
unable to single out  
any one thing  
to pounce on,
- 4** for all together,  
as if orchestrated,<sup>16</sup>  
twigs, leaves,

**5** **5. multitudinous** (mūl'tə-tōōd'n-əs, -tyōōd'n-əs): here, continual.

10

15

**16. orchestrated** (ōr'kī-strāt'əd): arranged as if for a performance.

## PRESENTATION

Discuss with students the associations that are frequently made with cats and with the wind. Remind students that cats are often portrayed as clever or sly (having nine lives) or as mysterious. Point out that the wind is often associated

with disturbance and change; and, because it cannot be seen, it is connected with mystery and the spirit.

Gunn's cat is puzzled rather than clever or sinister, but the wind in the poem maintains its common associations with change and mystery.

You may wish to point out why the cat's attention is focused on the leaves; they move and rustle as mice or other small prey would.



small pebbles pause

5 in their shifting,  
their rubbing  
against each other.

20

6 She is still listening  
when the wind is already  
three gardens off.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The speaker observes the reactions of a cat when a light wind blows into the yard.
- a. Which images convey the cat's vigilance or

alertness? b. Which images tell us what the cat hears?

2a. What causes the "multitudinous rustling / and crackling"? b. Why is the cat confused by these sounds?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

A cat's senses are depicted both by the photographer and by the poet as having a powerful range. The cat in the photograph—as large as its natural surroundings—views the world with intense vigilance. The angle of the trees and their lack of foliage suggest a windy day in late autumn or early winter, and the blurred image of the cat and the eerie background light add mystery.

5

**Imagery.** With "shifting" and "rubbing," poet creates sight, sound, and touch imagery that draws reader into sensory world of cat.

6

**What two meanings of "still" apply in this line?** The cat is stationary and also continues to listen.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. "Cocks her ears," "pupils dwindle/to specks," "stare first upward/and then on every side," and "still listening" convey cat's alertness and vigilance. 1b. "Multitudinous rustling" and "crackling all around" reveal what cat hears.

2a. Wind causes leaves to rustle and crackle. 2b. Perhaps because she thinks they indicate prey running through leaves. Also because she cannot locate focal point of noise.



## PRESENTATION

Since “The Meadow Mouse” and “The Fawn” (which follows) provide interesting comparisons, you may want to have students read and discuss them on the same day. Precede the reading by asking students to discuss the photographs of

the meadow mouse and the fawn, pointing out similarities and differences. Consider asking two of your students to prepare and present oral readings of the poems.

If you present Roethke’s poem separately from Millay’s, ask students to locate the comparisons

the poet uses to describe the mouse. Also have students contrast the images in the two parts of the poem. What **mood** do these images create in each part?

Finally, ask students to describe the character of the **speaker**—probably Roethke himself.

### The Meadow Mouse

1

Mouse’s new environment is entirely manufactured, artificial rather than natural.

2

Speaker believes he has done mouse a favor by bringing him in, that mouse should be grateful.

3

**Diction.** Word *quaker* indicates mouse is shaking; may also indicate mouse’s peaceful nature by associating mouse with Quakers.

4

**Figurative language.** Use of simile and **metaphor** to emphasize mouse’s tininess and helplessness suggests speaker’s fascination with mouse.

5

**Imagery.** “Bottle-cap watering-trough” suggests speaker’s affection for and protectiveness of mouse.

6

Mouse’s behavior deceives speaker into thinking mouse is content with captivity.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

The meadow mouse, which looks something like a small groundhog, is a relative of the common house mouse but has a larger head and a fuller body. Its gray color helps camouflage it from predators.

## The Meadow Mouse

THEODORE ROETHKE°

*Poets choose their images carefully—as they choose their words—to control the reader’s response. How do the images in this poem gain sympathy and affection for the baby mouse?*

I

1 In a shoe box stuffed in an old nylon stocking

Sleeps the baby mouse I found in the meadow,

Where he trembled and shook beneath a stick

2 Till I caught him up by the tail and brought him in,

Cradled in my hand,

5

3 A little quaker, the whole body of him trembling,

His absurd whiskers sticking out like a cartoon-mouse,

4 His feet like small leaves,

Little lizard-feet,

Whitish and spread wide when he tried to struggle away,

10

Wriggling like a miniscule° puppy.

11. **miniscule:** tiny.

Now he’s eaten his three kinds of cheese and drunk from

5 his bottle-cap watering-trough—

6 So much he just lies in one corner,

° Roethke (rĕt’kĕ).



They should be able to see that he is observant, caring, hopeful, realistic, and compassionate.

His tail curled under him, his belly big  
7 As his head; his batlike ears  
Twitching, tilting toward the least sound.

8 Do I imagine he no longer trembles  
When I come close to him?  
He seems no longer to tremble.

## II

But this morning the shoe-box house on the back porch is  
empty.

9 Where has he gone, my meadow mouse,  
My thumb of a child that nuzzled in my palm?—  
To run under the hawk's wing,  
Under the eye of the great owl watching from the elm tree,  
To live by courtesy of the shrike,<sup>o</sup> the snake, the tomcat.

10 I think of the nestling<sup>o</sup> fallen into the deep grass,  
The turtle gasping in the dusty rubble of the highway,  
The paralytic stunned in the tub, and the water rising—  
All things innocent, hapless,<sup>o</sup> forsaken.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. In line 7, the speaker describes the mouse as having whiskers "like a cartoon-mouse." What other comparisons does the speaker use to describe the mouse?

2. In the first part of the poem, the speaker describes the mouse several times as "trembling." a. What does he imagine in lines 17–19? b. How do you think the speaker feels toward the mouse?

3. The second part of the poem contrasts sharply with the first part. The images in the first part create a mood of playfulness and affection. a. What images in the second part create a mood of helplessness and terror? b. How does the speaker express compassion for all helpless creatures?

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 34 / Selection Test 33 / Vocabulary Test 19 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 34

15

20

25 25. **shrike**: a violent, shrill-voiced bird of prey.

26. **nestling**: baby bird.

29. **hapless**: unfortunate.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Analyzing Word Structure

Many words in our language are made up of separate word elements. The word *innocent*, for example, is made up of two parts. The first part, *in-*, is a **prefix** from Latin meaning "not." The main part or *root* of the word is *nocens*, also from Latin, meaning "to do wrong to." *Innocent* means "not doing wrong to" or "guiltless." The word *whitish* is also made up of two parts. The root is the word *white* and the part at the end, *-ish*, is a **suffix** meaning "somewhat."

1 Identify the separate elements in each of these words, using a dictionary where necessary: *absurd*, *batlike*, *forsake*, *hapless*, *nestling*, *twitching*.

7

**What do the motions of the mouse's ears indicate?** He is still wary and afraid.

8

**Diction.** Phrases "Do I imagine" and "He seems" imply speaker's uncertainty that mouse is calm and content.

9

**Irony.** Word *my* is ironic, for the mouse has never belonged to speaker, nor did mouse ever really "nuzzle" (snuggle up to) him.

10

**Imagery.** Series of images suggests speaker's compassion for all helpless creatures.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. For other comparisons, see ll. 8, 9, 11, 15, and 22.

2a. That mouse is no longer frightened when he approaches. 2b. Protective and affectionate.

3a. Images of predatory creatures in ll. 23–25 and of helpless creatures in ll. 26–28. 3b. He gives examples of helpless creatures in ll. 26–28 and refers to them as "innocent, hapless, forsaken."

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Absurd**: *ab-* (from) and *surd* (dullness or dimness).

**Batlike**: root *bat* and *-like* (in the manner of).

**Forsake**: *for-* (away, apart) and *sake* (end, purpose, or benefit).

**Hapless**: *hap* (luck) and *-less* (without).

**Nestling**: root *nest* and *-ling* (having a connection to).

**Twitching**: root *twitch* and *-ing* (act of doing).

## PRESENTATION

In planning the presentation of "The Fawn," consider that your students, depending on where they have lived and traveled, may have seen few deer or none at all. Direct their attention to the excellent photograph of a fawn on

this page, pointing out how its coloring serves as camouflage. Additional information on the deer's habitat may be obtained from encyclopedias or from many nature magazines.

As you read the poem aloud, ask students to visualize the fawn and to speculate on why it is

alone in the forest. Ask them what the relationship is between the **speaker** and the natural world.

# The Fawn

**EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY**

*How do the images in the final stanza of this poem contrast with the images in the first stanza? How does this contrast affect your feelings for the fawn?*

## The Fawn

**1**  
Poem does not have a regular pattern of rhythm or rhyme.

**2**  
**Connotation.** Paired with *beautiful*, the word *monstrous* does not suggest "hideous" but connotes "awesome."

**3**  
**Imagery.** Vivid sight imagery is created by deer's "polished cleft small ebony hooves" and its "dappled," or spotted, appearance.

**4**  
**Inversion.** Unexpected inversion "lay he" suggests surprise of finding fawn in the open, which implies that it may have been abandoned or orphaned.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

The writing assignment on the next page asks students to compare the poems by Roethke and Millay, discussing similarities and differences in choice of details, imagery, and attitudes toward nature. A variation of that assignment would be to ask students to compare this photograph of a fawn to the photograph of a meadow mouse on p. 310.

**1** There it was I saw what I shall never forget  
And never retrieve.  
**2** Monstrous and beautiful to human eyes, hard to believe,  
He lay, yet there he lay,  
**3** Asleep on the moss, his head on his polished cleft small ebony<sup>5</sup>  
hooves,  
The child of the doe, the dappled child of the deer.

5. **ebony:** black.

5

Surely his mother had never said, "Lie here  
Till I return," so spotty and plain to see  
**4** On the green moss lay he,  
His eyes had opened; he considered me.

10



\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 35 / Selection Test 33 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 34



I would have given more than I care to say  
To thrifty ears, might I have had him for my friend  
One moment only of that forest day:

- 5 Might I have had the acceptance, not the love  
Of those clear eyes;  
Might I have been for him the bough above  
Or the root beneath his forest bed,  
A part of the forest, seen without surprise.

15

Was it alarm, or was it the wind of my fear lest<sup>o</sup> he depart  
6 That jerked him to his jointy knees  
And sent him crashing off, leaping and stumbling  
On his new legs, between the stems of the white trees?

19. lest: that.

20

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The speaker in this poem sees a rare sight—a lone fawn. **a.** What are her feelings when she sees the fawn? **b.** What images does she use to describe the fawn? **c.** What do you think she means by the word *monstrous* in line 3?
2. In line 14, the speaker says she wished she might have “the acceptance, not the love” of the shy fawn. She knows it would be impossible for so wild a creature to love any human being. Reread lines 16–18. What do you think she means by “acceptance”?

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Comparing Two Poems

The situations in “The Meadow Mouse” (page 310) and “The Fawn” are similar: a speaker comes upon an animal unexpectedly, wishes to befriend it, but instead frightens it away. Although the subject of both poems is the relationship of human beings to nature, the focus in each poem is different. In “The Meadow Mouse,” the speaker’s feelings are directed toward the mouse and toward all helpless things. In “The Fawn,” the focus of the experience is the speaker’s sense of loss.

Compare the two poems, discussing similarities and differences in choice of details, imagery, and attitudes toward nature.

5

**What does the speaker wish for in this stanza?** Speaker would like to be part of nature to help the fawn, but speaker’s repeated phrase “Might I” shows her realization that as a human she is separated from nature.

6

**Imagery.** Description suggests fawn’s instinctive fear of human beings. Visual image associates fawn’s legs with slender tree trunks which speaker is left looking at.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. She can hardly believe her eyes but is deeply moved by so beautiful and rare a sight. **1b.** See ll. 3–6, 8, 10, and 20–22. **1c.** The best meanings are probably “awesome,” “extraordinary,” “wonderful,” and “impressive.”
2. Responses will vary. Possibly speaker wishes she could have been as natural a support to the fawn as bough or root so that it would not have been disturbed by her presence.

### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

To help students organize their ideas for this writing assignment, you may suggest that the paragraph be developed with complete sentences answering the following questions:

1. What is the similarity of subject matter in the two poems?
2. How does the speaker feel about the meadow mouse? Discuss images that show his feelings.
3. How does the speaker feel about the fawn? Discuss images that show her feelings.
4. How are the two speakers’ feelings alike? How are they different?

## PRESENTATION

Explain to students that this poem concerns a particular event in the poet's life to which he had trouble adjusting. Students may not agree on what has happened to the child in the poem. Some may mention the possibility that the child

is in a hospital or with a divorced mother. Most students, however, will think the child has died. Ask students to support their opinions with evidence from the poem.

# Empty House

STEPHEN SPENDER

*Before you read this poem, consider the connotations of the word empty.*

## Empty House

1

**Style.** Poet emphasizes solitude by putting "I was alone" on a separate line—the shortest in the poem.

2

**Why does speaker mention "animal, vegetable, mineral" noises?** Emphasizes that nonhuman noises have replaced sounds of the child.

3

**Metaphor.** On one level, the battle was the imaginary one the child waged with toy soldiers; on another level is the "battle" or incident that resulted in loss of child.

4

**Metaphor.** Emptiness of house is compared to emptiness the speaker feels inside himself; touching anything inside the literal house is as painful as touching a nerve inside the figurative house, or body.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Responses will vary. Child could have left on trip, grown up, or died. 1b. A final illness may have taken child away from his soldiers and paintbox.

2a. The house seems larger without the child who had "filled" it. 2b. Noises are now made by "Animal, vegetable, mineral, nail, creaking board, or mouse."

3a. He is shocked and grief-stricken. 3b. It is as empty and still as the house. 3c. They evoke extreme emotional pain.

Then, when the child was gone,

1 I was alone

2 In the house, suddenly grown huge. Each noise

Explained its cause away,

Animal, vegetable, mineral,

5

Nail, creaking board, or mouse.

3 But mostly there was quiet of after battle

Where round the room still lay

The soldiers and the paintbox, all the toys.

Then, when I went to tidy these away,

10

My hands refused to serve:<sup>o</sup>

11. to serve: to do what the speaker wants them to do.

4 My body was the house,

And everything he'd touched, an exposed nerve.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The child is no longer in the house, but we are not told why. a. What do you think happened to the child? b. What do the images in lines 7–9 suggest may have happened?

2. The speaker says that the house, with the child gone, has "suddenly grown huge."

a. What does this phrase mean? b. The noises in the house are no longer made by the child. According to lines 3–6, what are the noises made by?

3. a. How would you describe the emotions of the speaker in this poem? b. Look at the last two lines of the poem. In what ways is the speaker's body like the house? c. Why does each thing the child touched seem like "an exposed nerve"?

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 36 / Selection Test 33*

## PRESENTATION

Point out to students that Soto grew up in the West that he describes. The **setting** in this poem is the desert area of southern California, which may be unfamiliar to some students. Encourage students to find photographs and information

that will help the class see the chula, the banana plant, the javelina, and the cork tree.

# The Space

**GARY SOTO**

*How does this poem make use of imagery to give you a picture of a specific place?*

- 1 West of town,  
Near Hermosa's well,  
I sleep sometimes—  
In a hammock of course—
- 2 Among avocado trees,  
Cane, spider-grass,  
The hatchet-faced chula,  
The banana's umbrella  
Of leaves.  
It is here  
In the spiny brush  
Where cocks gabble,  
Where the javelina°  
Lies on its side  
Like an overturned high-heel.
- 3 I say it is enough  
To be where the smells  
Of creatures  
Braid like rope  
And to know if  
The grasses' rustle  
Is only  
A lizard passing.
- 4 It is enough, brother,  
Listening to a bird coo  
A leash of parables,°  
Keeping an eye  
On the moon,
- 5 The space  
Between cork trees  
Where the sun first appears.

7. **chula** (chōō'lā): a plant that is indigenous to northern Mexico.

13. **javelina** (hā'və-lē'nā): a piglike animal.

26. **parables** (pār'ə-bōlz): short simple stories illustrating a lesson.

## The Space

**1**  
**Diction.** Word *west* suggests not only direction but also vast spaces of the West that are implied in the poem's title; with this line, the speaker immediately separates himself from the town and people.

**2**  
**Imagery.** Images of flora and fauna appealing to sight, sound, and touch establish **setting** as the American Southwest.

**3**  
Phrase "it is enough" suggests speaker is satisfied with his separation from town.

**4**  
**Repetition.** May indicate confirmation of speaker's pleasure in natural world.

**5**  
*What does poet suggest by his use of the word "space" here and in the title?* The space between the trees suggests not only the physical space in the desert but also the freedom that the **setting** gives the speaker.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to recall unusual or striking images in the poems they have just read, tell what senses the images appeal to, and explain why these images are so effective.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Since almost all of the poems in this section paint vivid pictures, students interested in art may want to illustrate a particular image or an entire poem.

Some students might trace a particular kind of

imagery, such as sound, taste, or touch, throughout the poems in this section. Encourage them to examine the effect of these images on their understanding of the poems. Some may wish to compare or contrast different poets' uses of a particular kind of imagery.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Most students will infer that setting is the desert of the American Southwest.

2a. The poem appeals to sight, smell, touch, and sound.

2b. Sight: "avocado tree," "spider-grass," "hatchet-faced chula," "javelina lying on its side "like an overturned high-heel," the moon and the sun coming up between two "cork trees"; Smell: "smells of creatures." Touch: "spiny," "braid like rope." Sound: "gab-ble," "rustle," "coo."

3. Responses will vary. Bird might teach value of peaceful life spent close to nature or in solitude.

4a. To reinforce an implied contrast with city life, to emphasize that he needs nothing else to be happy, or to convince himself that he is satisfied. 4b. Responses will vary. He probably loves it.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### Thom Gunn

Particularly concerned with technique and control, Gunn began his career by writing defiantly realistic, irreverent, militaristic poems. Since he moved from England to the U.S. in 1954, his poetry has become more humanistic and compassionate, focusing on the natural world and employing free verse and sharp images.

### Theodore Roethke

Roethke sought his own identity in the natural world around him. His poems are either rational in theme, traditional in form, and ironic in mood, or free and Whitmanesque. He sensed the spiritual in nature, but he also saw its darker side.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. From the details of description, what can you infer about the location of "the space"?

2a. Which senses does the poem appeal to?

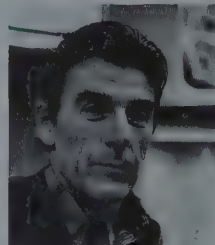
b. Locate specific examples of each kind of imagery.

3. The speaker refers to a bird cooing "A leash of parables." What kind of "lessons" might the bird teach?

4a. Why does the speaker repeat the phrase "it is enough"? b. How do you think he feels about this particular place?

## About the Authors

### Thom Gunn (1929– )



Thom(son William) Gunn was born in Gravesend, England, and attended Cambridge University. He has published *Fighting Terms*, *The Sense of Movement*, and *My Sad Captains*. He has also

collaborated with his brother Ander on a book of photographs and poems called *Positives*. He now lives in California and teaches at the University of California at Berkeley.

### Theodore Roethke (1908–1963)



Theodore Roethke was born in Saginaw, Michigan, and spent much of his youth exploring the wild countryside or observing the mysterious processes of growth and life in his father's

greenhouses. His poetry is rich in observations of the natural world and covers a wide range of moods. He won many awards for poetry, including a Pulitzer Prize and two National Book Awards.

Interested students might read other poems about cats, such as T. S. Eliot's "Macavity: The Mystery Cat" or William Carlos Williams' "Poem." Students might then compare or contrast the poets' different views toward cats.

Students will respond well to the vivid imag-

ery of Roethke and Millay. If students are compiling poetry journals or scrapbooks, encourage them to use poems by these writers, perhaps focusing on a particular theme such as city life, nature, seasons, or love.

Some students might enjoy writing their own

poems about a favorite animal or place. Have them concentrate on using clear, vivid images that appeal to various senses.

### Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950)



Edna St. Vincent Millay was born in Rockland, Maine. She began publishing poetry when she was still in high school, and her first long poem, "Renaissance," was

written when she was barely nineteen. After graduating from college, she moved to New York City, where she made her living as an actress and playwright for the Provincetown Players. In 1923, her collection of poems, *The Harp-Weaver*, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

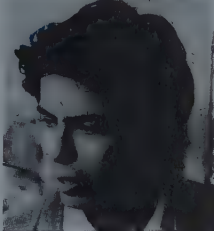
### Stephen Spender (1909– )



Stephen Spender was born in London. As a young man, he became well-known for his poems of political protest and for his sympathy for the underdog. His later poetry is less public and

more personal: it explores the private worlds of people rather than the political world outside. His poetry has been praised for its compassionate pictures of human emotions and needs.

### Gary Soto (1952– )



Gary Soto was born in Fresno, California, and attended California State University. His first book of poems, *The Elements of San Joaquin* (1977), won the United States

Award of International Poetry Forum. He has received a number of other awards, including the Academy of American Poets Prize. "The Space" is from a collection called *The Tale of Sunlight* (1978), which is a book-length poem about two characters, Molina and Manuel Zaragoza. Critics and reviewers have linked Soto's writing with that of Carl Sandburg. In contrast to Sandburg's figures, who are Midwestern landowners and farmers, Soto's subjects are migrant workers who know and work the land, but who have little hope of ever owning the land. Soto teaches Chicano studies at the University of California at Berkeley.

### Edna St. Vincent Millay

Millay's early poems reflect her love of the seascapes and landscapes of her Maine home. She supported the feminist movement of the 1920s and became associated with the Bohemian life style. Her diction is precise and musical.

### Stephen Spender

Spender's mother was an invalid, and both his parents died when he was still young. In the 1930s, Spender befriended Christopher Isherwood, W. H. Auden, and T. S. Eliot, and each of them exerted an influence on his writing. Since World War II, Spender has concentrated more on criticism than poetry, and his occasional poems are intense, withdrawn, and highly autobiographical.

### Gary Soto

Soto has worked as a migrant worker like those he describes in his poetry. Like other poets in the Fresno School, he writes poems with enjambed lines—sentences separated into several short lines of poetry—that contain precise diction and sharp imagery. Some of his poems reflecting urban life are brutally realistic, but his landscape poems capture beautiful natural rhythms. Even the landscape poems, however, carry an undercurrent of possible desolation—concealed wasteland imagery.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify and interpret the use of **simile**, **metaphor**, **personification**, and **symbol** in poetry. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** on p. 181 of the *Teacher's Manual* will provide students with practice in solving analogies.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Acquaint students with **figurative language** by asking them to rewrite several clichés as fresh comparisons. Examples are provided on p. 175 of the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section emphasizes that **figurative language** can appeal to a reader's imagination by representing one thing in terms of another. Poets use the richly imaginative quality of figurative language, the opposite of literal language, to share insightful experiences. Tell students to look for two meanings as they read the poems in this section: the literal and the figurative.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

A sunrise or a sunset is one of the richest poetic images, one that may be used as a **symbol**, **metaphor**, or **simile**.

Ask students to observe closely the details in this photograph and decide whether it portrays a sunrise or a sunset. Then ask students to write a paragraph describing what they see and explaining what each image might represent. Students might interpret sunrise as the beginning of life and sunset as the end of life. They might see the rocks or reefs offshore as problems that must be encountered in life. Encourage individual interpretations, but require support from the photograph.

# FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

In our everyday speech, we often use *figurative language*—language that represents one thing in terms of another. We may describe an action or a feeling by comparing it to something else: “I felt like a worm”; “We ate like kings”; “That test was murder.” Expressions that describe one thing in terms of another are called *figures of speech*.

Figures of speech help to make language richer in meaning and more imaginative. In *Macbeth*, William Shakespeare describes a storm in which the sky grows so dreary that it seems as though “dark night strangles” the sun. Emily Dickinson, describing a violent storm, uses this figure of speech to evoke the sound of a shrill wind: “There came a wind like a bugle.” Through figurative language poets can express fresh, exciting, or unusual relationships between things, and so give us new insights into what we see and feel.





## PRESENTATION

Set the mood by having students imagine a scene and situation like the one at the beginning of the poem. Have students perform a reading of the poem taking turns reading stanzas.

From their earlier readings of "The Wreck of

the *Hesperus*" and "Paul Revere's Ride," your students should immediately recognize Longfellow. If students are working on poetry projects, you may want to recommend Longfellow's poems for collections, reader's theater, dramatization, or memorization.

If you know "The Day Is Done" or another one of Longfellow's poems or passages well enough, recite it aloud with scarcely a glance at the book. Your recitation could motivate some of your students to memorize poetry themselves.

# The Day Is Done

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

*Poetry is often compared to music, primarily because poetry depends on the sounds of words for many of its effects. Note how Longfellow makes use of that comparison here.*

1 The day is done, and the darkness

2 Falls from the wings of night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

I see the lights of the village

3 Gleam through the rain and the mist,  
And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,  
That my soul cannot resist:

4 A feeling of sadness and longing,  
That is not akin to pain,  
And resembles sorrow only  
As the mist resembles the rain.

Come, read to me some poem,  
Some simple and heartfelt lay,<sup>o</sup>  
That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
And banish the thoughts of day.

5 Not from the grand old masters,  
Not from the bards sublime,<sup>o</sup>  
Whose distant footsteps echo  
Through the corridors of time.

6 For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor;  
And tonight I long for rest.

Read from some humbler poet,

7 Whose songs gushed from his heart,  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start;

5

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14. **lay:** a ballad or story poem.

18. **bards sublime:** poets who wrote lofty, exalted poems.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read the poems, margin annotations will aid you in guiding analysis and discussion of simile, metaphor, and personification.

### The Day is Done

1

**Alliteration.** Repetition of consonants *d*, *n*, and *f* contributes to musical effect of first stanza.

2

**Figurative language.** The metaphor "wings of night" compares night to a bird; metaphor's extension into a simile in ll. 3–4 indicates bird is an eagle.

3

**What kind of atmosphere is evoked by images of rain and mist? How do they reflect speaker's attitude?** Evoke dreary atmosphere. Reflect speaker's sadness.

4

Use to answer study question 1a, p. 320.

5

**What kind of diction does Longfellow use in this stanza?** Formal, elegant, and respectful.

6

**Simile.** Old masters' poetry compared to harsh, rousing sounds of military music. Reminds speaker of life's complications.

7

**Simile.** Comparisons imply that relaxed, heartfelt spontaneity of "humbler poet's" verse corresponds more closely to speaker's gently melancholic mood.

8

**Simile.** Powerful comparison of poems to emotional blessing; underscores dramatic effects of poetry.

9

**Personification.** Depiction of "cares" as folding their tents and slipping quietly away corresponds to the peaceful fading of day into night.

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Depressed, sad, restless, tired. He longs for rest. 1b. "Simple and heartfelt" poetry.  
2. Poems of masters are like martial music; their mighty, complicated messages suggest "endless toil and endeavor." The "simple and heartfelt lay" resembles "wonderful melodies" that are more peaceful and spiritual.

3a. Ending of poem completes the analogy; just as day fades into night, so do speaker's cares fade to peaceful calm. 3b. The ending soothes the speaker's feelings of sadness, longing, and fatigue.

#### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. The great poets' "mighty thoughts" of "Life's endless toil and endeavor."

2. The soothing lyrics of a "humbler poet" to the feeling of blessedness that follows prayer.

3. Compares cares to Arabs in the sense of being able to "fold their tents" and slip away quietly.

4. In stanza 1, darkness falls "as a feather" (slowly, peacefully). In stanza 3, "feeling . . . resembles sorrow . . . / As the mist resembles rain" (slight depression, longing).

Who, through long days of labor,  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.

30

Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,

8 And come like the benediction<sup>o</sup>  
That follows after prayer.

35 35. **benediction:** blessing.

Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice.

40

9 And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares, that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.

#### For Study and Discussion

##### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. What is the speaker's mood at the beginning of the poem? b. What does he believe has power to change his mood?

2. The speaker distinguishes between two kinds of poems. How is the "music" of these poems different?

3. The final stanza of Longfellow's poem is famous and is often quoted. a. How is the concluding stanza related to the opening stanzas of the poem? b. How does it bring the poem to a satisfying close?

#### Literary Elements

##### Similes

A **simile** is a figure of speech that compares two unlike things, using a word such as *like*, *as*,

or *than* to suggest the similarity. Simple similes occur in our everyday speech:

He runs *like* the wind.  
Her sunburn made her face red *as* a beet.  
Superman is faster *than* a speeding bullet.

In "The Day Is Done," Longfellow uses several striking similes. Look, for example, at the comparison in the sixth stanza:

For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor;

The word *martial* means "military" or "warlike." What is Longfellow comparing to the sounds of martial music?

2 Look at the simile in stanza 9. What two things are being compared? A famous and often-quoted comparison is found in the last stanza. What is Longfellow comparing his cares to?

4 Find other similes in the poem and explain the comparison in each one.

## PRESENTATION

Ask students if they have ever tried to describe a sunrise or a sunset. Then ask them if they were satisfied with their description. A common description might be, "The sunset was beautiful last night. You should have seen it." Although

such a description is suitable as a remark to a friend, it does not offer effective images like those in Dickinson's poem. Request that students listen for lively and unusual comparisons as you read the poem aloud. Then guide students in an analysis and discussion of the **metaphors** and

**similes** in the poem. After you finish your discussion, invite your students to shut their eyes and try to visualize the images in the poem as you or a student reads it aloud again.



# I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose

**EMILY DICKINSON**

*Emily Dickinson's figurative language is known for its striking originality.  
How does her depiction of sunset differ figuratively from that of sunrise?*

- 1 I'll tell you how the sun rose—
- 2 A ribbon at a time.  
The steeples swam in amethyst,  
The news like squirrels ran.
- 3 The hills untied their bonnets,  
The bobolinks begun.  
Then I said softly to myself,
- 4 "That must have been the sun!"

5

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

This photograph is an excellent companion piece to Dickinson's poem because it portrays the sun rising or setting in layers, as Dickinson wrote, "a ribbon at a time." The photograph also reflects the purples and yellows described in the poem.

### I'll Tell You How the Sun Rose

1

Since Dickinson usually did not tittle her poems, editors frequently use the first line of the poem as the title.

2

**Figurative language.** Dickinson uses figurative language to describe the sunrise: "A ribbon at a time" (bands of color in the sky); "steeples swam in amethyst" (set in purplish sky); "news like squirrels ran" (light of sun advances quickly).

3

**How are hills described in line 5?** Like women, the hills untie bonnets (lose their shadows) as the sun warms them.

4

**What attitude does the speaker's remark suggest?** She is in awe of the sunrise.



5 Use of personal pronoun *he* subtly personifies sun.

6 **Simile.** Created by “seemed,” comparison refers to the light fading as the sky grows darker near sunset.

7 **Metaphor.** Suggests fading of sunlight into grayness of dusk.

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Bands or layers of color in sky at sunrise.
- 2a. Purple. 2b. When one looks up at steeples, they appear to be moving against the purple sky.
- 3a. *News* refers to the sunrise.
- 3b. Light advances quickly.
4. Speaker is describing sky tinged with gold of sunset fading away to grayness of dusk.

#### LITERARY ELEMENTS

##### Metaphors

1. Hills are compared to girls, or women, who wear bonnets.
2. Hills take off bonnets, or shadows fall away as sunlight surrounds hills; girls take off bonnets as the sun warms them.

##### Inverted Word Order

1. Placing “like squirrels” near “news” intensifies comparison and emphasizes the motion.
2. Placing “how he set” in initial position focuses attention on sun rather than speaker.

5 But how he set, I know not.  
6 There seemed a purple stile°  
Which little yellow boys and girls  
Were climbing all the while

Till when they reached the other side,

7 A dominie° in gray  
Put gently up the evening bars,  
And led the flock away.

10 10. **stile:** steps enabling a person to climb over a fence or wall.

14. **dominie:** clergyman.

15

#### For Study and Discussion

##### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The speaker describes the sun rising “a ribbon at a time.” What image does this phrase give you?

2a. What is the color of amethyst? b. In what way might the steeples appear to *swim* “in amethyst”?

3a. What does the word *news* refer to in line 4? b. How might the spreading of the news look like squirrels running?

4. Notice the colors the speaker uses to describe the “stile” (line 10), the children (line 11), and the “dominie” (line 14). How do these colors and the actions described in lines 10–16 help to suggest the setting sun?

#### Literary Elements

##### Metaphors

Like a simile, a **metaphor** points out a resemblance between two unlike things. A simile makes the comparison through the use of connecting words such as *like* or *as*: Jim growled *like* a bear. A metaphor identifies the two things as one: Jim is a bear.

Emily Dickinson is famous for her unusual metaphors. In line 5 of this poem, she says that the hills “untied their bonnets.” A bonnet, like any other kind of hat, hides part of the wearer’s head and also keeps the head warm. What is she comparing the hills to? Why is it appropriate that the hills should “untie their bonnets” when the sun rises?

##### Inverted Word Order

Emily Dickinson often uses **inverted word order** in her poetry; that is, the words in a line are turned around so that they do not occur in the usual or expected position. Normally we would say “The news ran like squirrels.” Dickinson, however, writes “The news like squirrels ran.” What emphasis is gained when the poet changes the normal word order of this sentence?

Another example of inversion occurs in line 9. What is gained by the change in normal word order?

## PRESENTATION

Remind students that Frost is one of America's most famous and best-loved poets. Ask them to recall poems by Frost that they have read previously, such as "The Runaway," and tell them that they will also be reading "Mending Wall" in

this section of poems.

"It Bids Pretty Fair" is deceptively short and simple. Encourage students to think about what "play" Frost means as you read the poem aloud. Review **irony**, providing a simple example such as saying "It's a beautiful day" and meaning the

opposite. Ask students to explain the **irony** in the title and in the first line.

# It Bids Pretty Fair

**ROBERT FROST**

*"All the world's a stage," Shakespeare's metaphor, may help you understand the metaphor in this poem.*

- 1 The play seems out for an almost infinite run.
- 2 Don't mind a little thing like the actors fighting.  
The only thing I worry about is the sun.  
We'll be all right if nothing goes wrong with the lighting.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. This poem consists of a single metaphor.
  - a. What is the play referred to in the first line?
  - b. Why does this play have "an almost infinite run"? c. Who are the actors and why are they fighting?
2. The poem's title, "It Bids Pretty Fair," means "It looks pretty good."
  - a. How is the title ironic?
  - b. Do you think the speaker really believes that "we'll be all right"?
  - c. What does the metaphor of the play tell you about the speaker's attitude?

### It Bids Pretty Fair

1

**Metaphor.** "The play" is human life. The phrase "infinite run" suggests a meaning similar to that of the title—that humanity is doing pretty well; however, the word *seems* indicates that the poet is being ironic.

2

Lines 2–4 imply that poet is not so worried that humanity will destroy itself in a war as he is that the universe will run out of energy. Frost was concerned about *entropy*, the idea that the universe becomes more disordered as its energy diminishes.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. The play is human life.
- 1b. Earth and life on it should endure for millions of years.
- 1c. Actors are people waging war over various political, economic, and social issues.
- 2a. Although title sounds somewhat optimistic, speaker has doubts. Energy may not last.
- 2b. Opinions will vary.
- 2c. The speaker uses metaphor because human history, like a play, could run for a very long time or close abruptly. Metaphor of human beings as actors suggests humans are capable of impulsive behavior. Poet assumes attitude of spectator but is expressing concern.

## PRESENTATION

Before reading and discussing the poem, ask students if they have ever seen a moon tiger or if they can guess what one is. Give students a minute to look over the poem and then have someone read the poem aloud, reading in sen-

tences rather than lines. Follow the reading with a discussion of the poem's basic **metaphor**.

# Moon Tiger

DENISE LEVERTOV

*What metaphor is expressed in the title of this poem? How is the metaphor developed in the poem?*

## Moon Tiger

1

**Metaphor.** Cold light moon casts in room resembles a tiger.

2

*How does Levertov extend metaphor through whole poem?* Light comes in and prowls; it has head; its feet "pad"; it has stripes; "its cold nose" sniffs and nudges.

3

**Imagery.** Cold refers to coldness of moonlight.

4

*What might the "moon tiger" symbolize?* Answers will vary. Might symbolize any fear, the unknown.

1 The moon tiger.

In the room, here.

2 It came in, it is

prowling sleekly

under and over

the twin beds.

See its small head,

silver smooth,

hear the pad of its

large feet. Look,

its white stripes

in the light that slid

through the **jalousies**.<sup>o</sup>

It is sniffing our

3 clothes, its cold nose

nudges our bodies.

4 The beds are narrow,

but I'm coming in with you.

13. **jalousies** (jāl'ə-sēz): a type of window or door that is made of adjustable slats.

5

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15





*Habitation* (1939) by Marvin D. Cone (1891–1965). Oil on canvas.

Cedar Rapids Museum, Collection of Winnifred Cone

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Cone was an American artist and educator. A native of the state of Iowa, he taught, among other places, at an art colony established by another famous Iowa artist, Grant Wood. Cone progressed from painting landscapes to painting various still-life subjects, later specializing in circus paintings. He then focused on mysterious empty rooms and old houses, as in *Habitation*. His work culminated in abstract paintings.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. A tiger. 1b. Speaker probably feels that moon is beautiful but dangerous.

2a. Responses will vary. Examples include "prowling sleekly under and over the twin beds," "pad of its large feet," "white stripes." 2b. Moonlight moves (prowls) as moon is rising or setting; it may also seem to move because of swaying trees in its path. Draft of air coming through jalousies with moonlight might seem to sniff or nudge bodies; white light of moon looks cold, may evoke feelings of chill.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1a. Wind is driver of clouds, and clouds are horses.

1b. Spy is a spider.

1c. House is human head.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Like Frost's "It Bids Pretty Fair," "Moon Tiger" is based on one central metaphor.

a. To what thing is the moon compared? b. What does this comparison tell you about the speaker's feelings toward the moon?

2a. What phrases and details make the comparison strong? b. How might moonlight seem to prowls, sniff, or nudge bodies?

## Literary Elements

### Implied Metaphor

Sometimes a metaphor is suggested or **implied**. It does not directly state that one thing is 1 another, different thing. What comparisons are implied by the following metaphors?

- a The wind drove the galloping storm clouds across the sky.
- b Carefully, cleverly, the spy wove his web of deceit and waited to entrap his victim.
- c The windows of the old house stared out into the night, and the open door seemed to grin.

## PRESENTATION

In "Silver," Walter de la Mare describes how the moonlight distorts our visual perception of familiar objects. Tell students to listen quietly to the poem as it is read aloud and to be ready to describe how moonlight transforms the scene.

You may want to ask students why *shoon*, an archaic word, is used instead of the modern word *shoes* (rhyme and mood) and why *moveless* has been used instead of *motionless* (smoother and softer sound). Then ask students to discuss how the poem makes them feel.

Finally, have them evaluate how effectively the poet's diction, imagery, and figurative language contribute to mood.

# Silver

WALTER DE LA MARE

*This poem is famous for its evocation of a mood. How does the repetition of the word silver help to build that mood?*

## Silver

**1**  
*How is the moon personified? How does this add to the poem's mood?* Depicted as woman who "walks," "peers, and sees." Adds sense of beauty, mystery.

**2**  
*Thatch* is a roof made of straw, leaves, stems, etc.

**3**  
*Couched*: lying down, sleeping.

**4**  
**Alliteration.** Repetition of initial and internal s sounds in this line and throughout poem helps evoke the mood of silence, stillness, and mystery.

**5**  
**Repetition.** Poem repeatedly refers to way reflected moonlight seems to transform colors of world to silver.

Slowly, silently, now the moon  
**1** Walks the night in her silver shoon;<sup>o</sup>  
 This way, and that, she peers, and sees  
 Silver fruit upon silver trees;  
 One by one the casements<sup>o</sup> catch 5  
**2** Her beams beneath the silvery thatch;  
**3** Couched in his kennel, like a log,  
**4** With paws of silver sleeps the dog;  
 From their shadowy cote<sup>o</sup> the white breasts peep  
 Of doves in a silver-feathered sleep; 10  
 A harvest mouse goes scampering by,  
 With silver claws and a silver eye;  
 And moveless fish in the water gleam,  
**5** By silver reeds in a silver stream.

**2. shoon**: shoes. **5. casements**: window frames. **9. cote**: coop.



## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

- How are objects and animals transformed by the moonlight?
- The first line of the poem sets a still and silent mood. What images in the poem add to this mood?
- The word *silver* is repeated throughout the poem. **a.** What is the effect of this repetition? **b.** Would the word *golden* have been equally effective? Explain.
- Reread the poem and listen closely to its sounds. **a.** What sounds are repeated? **b.** How do these sounds help to create a quiet, still mood?

## Literary Elements

### Personification

**Personification** is a figure of speech that gives human qualities to something nonhuman. At the New Year, cartoonists depict the old year as a toothless old man and the new year as a sturdy baby. Death is often portrayed as a grim and bony figure in a hooded robe, carrying a scythe. The natural world is personified as Mother Nature. Through personification, a writer can describe a quality or idea in a concrete, yet imaginative way. In "Silver," Walter de la Mare personifies the moon. Which words and phrases in the poem suggest that the moon is human?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

This dark and mysterious photograph reinforces the mood created by Walter de la Mare's poem. On such a dark and silent night, the doves' coop would indeed be shadowed, and all objects would take on a silvery sheen.

### Relating Expression Skills

Some students may be interested in photography. Encourage them to combine this interest with their study of literature by having them photograph scenes that illustrate a favorite poem or evoke a mood similar to the poem's.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- Become silver.
- Moon moving slowly and silently, sleeping dog and doves, "moveless fish."
- 3a.** Repetition of *silver* is pleasing to the ear and emphasizes that everything moon touches is silver. **3b.** Responses will vary. *Silver* has colder, more mysterious sound than *golden*, which usually connotes sunlight.
- 4a.** Sounds most often repeated are *s*, *m*, *n*, *l*, *oo*, and long *e*. **4b.** Tend to prolong words and to make words sound quiet and soothing.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

- Moon "walks the night in her silver shoon"; "she peers, and sees"; "casements catch/Her beams."



## PRESENTATION

Since this is the last in a series of poems about the moon in the **figurative language** section, you may want to compare it with the other poems, especially "Silver." Ask students which forms a more beautiful mental picture—images

of moonlight illuminating the countryside or falling on city tenements and sidewalks.

Remind students that "Silver" describes moonlight on the countryside and tell them that McKay's poem will describe the moonlight in the city. Ask students to compare the **moods**, im-

ages, and themes of the two poems after they read and discuss "A Song of the Moon."

## A Song of the Moon

1

**Connotation.** "Grayness" suggests drabness and sadness; "a million homes" indicates lack of variety, mundane lives. May indicate widespread unhappiness.

2

**Simile.** Comparison of clothes to ghosts suggests loneliness and lifelessness of city.

3

City lights detract from magical quality of moonlight. In city, moonlight makes everything appear severely gray.

4

**Personification.** Like moon in previous stanza, flowers are personified ("laughing," "happy," etc.). Flowers provide sharp contrast to sadness of city.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Cement, steel and stone buildings, grayness.
2. Moon does not belong with tenements and clotheslines.
- 3a. Moonlight makes objects in city appear monotonous and gray. 3b. Compared to electric light in area, moonlight appears out of date and "too severe."
4. Poet projects feelings of sadness onto moon since it is unable to make city appear magical.
5. Moonlight belongs to flowers and open spaces of countryside.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

To encourage students to discuss poetry with one another, you may want to make this essay a group project. Have students work in groups of three, with each student responsible for writing one part of the essay independently and then incorporating his or her work with the efforts of the other group members.

# A Song of the Moon

CLAUDE MCKAY

The moonlight breaks upon the city's domes,  
And falls along cemented steel and stone,

1 Upon the grayness of a million homes,  
Lugubrious<sup>o</sup> in unchanging monotone.

Upon the clothes behind the tenement,  
2 That hang like ghosts suspended from the lines,  
Linking each flat,<sup>o</sup> but to each indifferent,  
Incongruous<sup>o</sup> and strange the moonlight shines.

There is no magic from your presence here,  
So moon, sad moon, tuck up your trailing robe,

3 Whose silver seems antique and too severe  
Against the glow of one electric globe.

4 Go spill your beauty on the laughing faces  
Of happy flowers that bloom a thousand hues,  
Waiting on tiptoe in the wilding<sup>o</sup> spaces,  
To drink your wine mixed with sweet draughts<sup>o</sup> of dews.

4. **lugubrious** (lŭ-gŭb'brĕ-əs, lŭ-gyŭbŭ'-): mournful.

5

7. **flat**: apartment.

8. **incongruous** (in-kŏng' grŭŭ-əs): unsuitable.

10

15. **wilding**: uncultivated.

16. **draughts** (drăfts).

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. What aspects of urban life are emphasized in the first two stanzas of the poem?
2. What makes the moonlight "incongruous and strange" (line 8)?
3. In line 9 the poet says that there is no magic in the moon's presence. a. What does he mean by "magic"? b. Why is it lacking in the scene?
4. Why does the poet address the moon as "sad" in line 10?
5. Where does the poet feel the beauty of moonlight belongs?

## Writing About Literature

### Comparing and Contrasting Poems

Compare and contrast "A Song of the Moon" with "Silver" (page 326). In your essay, be sure to include a discussion of imagery, personification, and mood.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## PRESENTATION

Introduce "Mending Wall" by discussing the reasons walls and fences are necessary: to confine livestock, to keep children away from busy streets and other dangers, to protect property from theft and vandalism, to insure privacy, etc.

Discuss briefly the mutual responsibility of two property owners to maintain fencing. Refer to the picture on the following page of a stone wall in rural New England and ask why this kind of fencing is often used there. (Farmers accomplish the double purpose of removing some of the

stones from their fields and building any necessary fences.)

The speaker in the poem is working with a neighbor to mend a stone wall in the springtime. Ask students to note the difference in the attitudes of the two neighbors as they work

# Mending Wall

**ROBERT FROST**

*This is one of Robert Frost's best-known poems, and it has been interpreted in various ways. Here are some questions to keep in mind as you read: What is the attitude of the speaker toward the wall? What is his attitude toward his neighbor? What impression do you get of the speaker from his thoughts and his actions?*

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun,  
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

1 The work of hunters is another thing: 5

I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made, 10  
But at spring mending-time we find them there.

2 I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;  
And on a day we meet to walk the line

3 And set the wall between us once again. 15  
We keep the wall between us as we go.

To each the boulders that have fallen to each.

4 And some are loaves and some so nearly balls

5 We have to use a spell to make them balance: 20  
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"  
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.

Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,  
One on a side. It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:

6 He is all pine and I am apple orchard. 25  
My apple trees will never get across

And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
If I could put a notion in his head:

"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it 30

Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the  
*Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 39 / Selection Test 34*

## Mending Wall

1

Lacking concern for anything but catching their prey, hunters destroy parts of walls.

2

Fact that narrator initiates mending reveals complexity of poem; he is not opposed to wall as much as he is curious about its purpose.

3

**Symbol.** Physical barrier represents more significant emotional or social barriers established over time.

4

**Metaphor.** Stones are referred to as loaves or balls, clearly conveying their shapes and sizes.

5

**What does the "spell" tell the reader about the speaker and his neighbor?** Responses will vary. Neighbors seem to be friends. They regard mending of wall as ritualistic.

6

**Assonance.** Repetition of short a sound in "and I am apple orchard" unifies the group of words describing the speaker and distinguishing him from his neighbor.

together.

You will need to guide students in discovering the poem's subtle meanings. Be sure to include the explanation and discussion of **symbols**, perhaps relating the symbolism of the wall to students' earlier discussion. Ask them also what

it is "that doesn't love a wall."

If possible, play a recording of Robert Frost reading this poem so that your students can hear his New England speech. Encourage them to visualize the story and characters as they listen.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

This photograph pictures a New England stone fence much like that described in Frost's "Mending Wall." Having owned a New England farm himself, Frost knew about these stone fences firsthand.

### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to list barriers in modern civilization that could be symbolized by a wall (prejudice, discrimination, ignorance, hatred, etc.). Then have them write a paragraph or brief essay analyzing one such barrier. Why was it established? Why has it remained? What can be done to remove it? Encourage students to find actual counterparts for the speaker and the neighbor in "Mending Wall." Other students may prefer to concentrate on the "Something . . . that doesn't love a wall." What might it be? Can people, should people, encourage it?





Before I built a wall I'd ask to know What I was walling in or walling out, And to whom I was like to give offense.	
7 Something there is that doesn't love a wall, That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him, But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather He said it for himself. I see him there, Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top	35
8 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.	40
9 He moves in darkness as it seems to me, Not of woods only and the shade of trees. He will not go behind his father's saying, And he likes having thought of it so well He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors."	45

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

- 1a. Although the speaker meets with his neighbor each spring to mend the wall, he thinks that the wall is unnecessary. Why?
- b. What is his neighbor's attitude toward mending the wall? c. What do these attitudes reveal about the speaker and his neighbor?
2. What does the speaker think people should consider before they put up walls?
- 3a. What simile does the speaker use near the end of the poem to describe his neighbor?
- b. In what sense does the neighbor "move in darkness" (line 41)?
4. In the first four lines, the speaker suggests that there is "Something"—a force or drive—that insists on breaking down walls. This "Something" can make a gap so wide that "even two can pass abreast." What does this image of two people walking side by side through a broken wall suggest to you?
- 5a. What is your impression of the speaker?
- b. Where does he exhibit a sense of humor?
- c. Do you think he has a good grasp of human nature? Explain.

## Literary Elements

### Symbols

**Symbols** are a part of our everyday lives. The eagle is a symbol of America; the skull and crossbones on a bottle is a symbol of poison; the dove is a symbol of peace.

Symbolism is one of the most powerful devices that a writer can use. It enables a writer to compress a very complex idea or set of ideas into one image or even one word. Certain symbols occur again and again in literature. For example, the butterfly is frequently used to symbolize the human soul; night, the sea, and winter often symbolize death; a journey often symbolizes the journey through life.

Writers often create their own symbols. Robert Frost seems to be talking about a simple and familiar process—mending a wall with a neighbor in spring. Yet, by the end of the poem, the wall, the neighbor, and the act of putting up a wall become symbolic; they come to represent things larger than themselves.

- 1 What does the "wall" symbolize? What is the
- 2 "Something . . . that doesn't love a wall"?

7

**Repetition.** First line of poem is repeated to emphasize strength and determination of force that breaks down wall.

8

**Simile.** Comparison to Stone Age man may refer to neighbor's closed mind, or it may suggest that man's territoriality (impulse to build walls) is an ancient thing.

9

*What is the literal meaning of the darkness in which the neighbor moves? What else is the narrator implying about him?* Neighbor is in dark woods, beneath shade of trees. Also, neighbor is not interested in change or enlightenment, only tradition.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Men know where dividing line is. 1b. He is stubborn about tradition. 1c. Speaker is more open-minded.
2. What they wall in or out.
- 3a. "Like an old-stone savage."
- 3b. Neighbor is entrenched in tradition.
4. Responses will vary. Students will probably say image seems friendly.
- 5a. Responses will vary. Decent, philosophical man with sense of humor. 5b. Lines 17–19, 25–26, and 36. 5c. Responses will vary. He wishes neighbor would think for himself but realizes there is little point in arguing with him.

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Wall may symbolize any barrier established for a long time.
2. "Something" might be nature, time, or God.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to define and give examples of the following types of figurative language—simile, metaphor, personification, and symbol.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

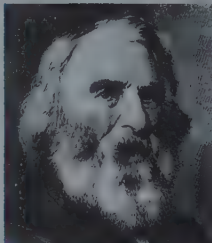
**Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**  
Although many modern critics consider Longfellow's poetry excessively sentimental and didactic, his style was greatly admired in his day in Europe as well as America. He popularized American subjects and themes, and he helped establish the national literature called for by Irving, Cooper, and Emerson. When he walked into a room, people stood or took off their hats, and school children took a holiday on his seventy-fifth birthday. His poetry is still loved by young people because of its narrative quality and regular rhyme and rhythm.

### Emily Dickinson

In 1862 Emily Dickinson experienced an emotional upheaval that still remains mysterious to her biographers and critics. The most common explanation of her emotional turbulence, reflected in her poetry, is her love for the Reverend Charles Wadsworth. There is no conclusive evidence that Rev. Wadsworth returned her love. He was married and only visited her briefly and infrequently before moving with his family to California. At any rate, this experience (or another in that year) became the catalyst for an astonishing burst of creativity—366 poems in one year. In April of 1862, Dickinson sent four poems and a letter to the poetry critic Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who recognized their merit and, after Dickinson's death, oversaw the publication of her work.

## About the Authors

### Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882)



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born in Portland, Maine. Four of his ancestors were pilgrims at Plymouth. Longfellow became the most famous American poet of his day and one of the most productive. He emphasized the values of freedom and wrote fearlessly against slavery at a time when many, less courageous, were silent. He was one of the first American writers to celebrate American events, and his historical poems are among his most famous: "Paul Revere's Ride," *Hiawatha*, *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, and *Evangeline*. Europeans as well as Americans were enthusiastic about his work; it was translated into twenty-four languages. Longfellow was the first American poet to have his bust placed in London's Westminster Abbey, where memorials are placed to England's greatest writers.

### Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)



It was said of Emily Dickinson that her life story could be told in very few words: she was born in Amherst, a small town in Massachusetts. She had an independent and intelligent mind, but was also extremely sensitive and shy. As she grew older, she withdrew more and more from the world, seldom meeting outsiders and rarely leaving her father's house and garden. She dressed only in white, and wrote her poetry on small scraps of paper that she stitched together into little packets and kept hidden in her room. Only a handful of these poems were published in her lifetime, none with her consent, and several without her name. It was only after her death that her many packets of poems were discovered. Today, these poems are recognized as some of the most original poetry of the nineteenth century, and Emily Dickinson, who died almost totally unknown to the public, is considered one of the great poets of her time.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Some students may enjoy matching one or more poems about the moon with paintings, collages, or photographs.

After reading the "moon poems" in this section, some students might want to write an essay

that explains the symbolism of the moon, citing specific words and lines that support their opinions.

You may have students read Shakespeare's famous "All the world's a stage" speech from *As You Like It*, Act Two, Scene 7, and compare it to

Frost's "It Bids Pretty Fair." Encourage students to examine **tone**, **diction**, and **imagery** in each work.

Have students write brief essays that explain their own **metaphors** for life. Volunteers may read their essays aloud.

### Robert Frost (1874–1963)



Robert Frost was born in San Francisco, California. When he was eleven years old his father died, and he moved with his mother to Lawrence, Massachusetts. Although Frost was deter-

mined to write poetry, no one seemed interested in or impressed with his work. He worked as a farmer in New England to support himself, but he did not like farming and was not successful at it. Still, Frost managed to scratch out a living, and he refused to believe he was not a good poet. His courage and determination were finally rewarded. He became one of America's best-known and most-respected poets, and the winner of four Pulitzer Prizes. His poems are distinguished for their wisdom and wit and for the different levels of meaning that lie beneath their surfaces.

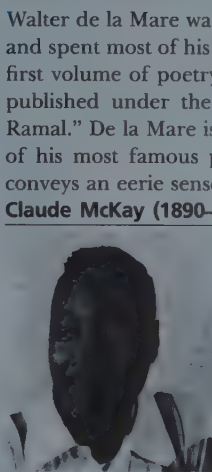
### Denise Levertov (1923– )



Denise Levertov (lēv'ər-tūv) was born in Essex, England, and educated at home. Her early poetry was traditional, but after the publication of her first book, *The Double Image*, she turned to

freer and less conventional forms. She is married to an American writer, Mitchell Goodman, and lives in New York.

### Walter de la Mare (1873–1956)



Walter de la Mare was born in Kent, England, and spent most of his life around London. His first volume of poetry, *Songs of Childhood*, was published under the pseudonym of "Walter Ramal." De la Mare is a master of mood. One of his most famous poems, "The Listeners," conveys an eerie sense of the supernatural.

### Claude McKay (1890–1948)

Claude McKay was born in Sunny Ville, Jamaica, in the West Indies. He moved to Kingston, where he began to write poems. When he was twenty-two, he published two collections of poetry, which won an award. He immigrated to the United States and attended Tuskegee Institute and Kansas State College. He became a prominent member of the Harlem Renaissance writers. His most important volume of poetry, *Harlem Shadows*, was published in 1922. He also wrote several novels, including *Home to Harlem*.

### Robert Frost

Throughout his life, Frost carried on what he called a "lover's quarrel with the world." He explored in easy colloquial rhythms the subjects of nature and human relationships, focusing on the themes of transience and the "desert places" in humanity. To him, a poem was "a momentary stay against confusion."

### Denise Levertov

When Levertov came to the United States, she was, she said, a British Romantic with a Victorian background. Influenced by her reading of the imagists William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens, she found poetry in daily experience and transformed the ordinary into art.

### Walter de la Mare

The worlds of childhood, dream, and fantasy are the provinces of Walter de la Mare, who is often regarded as a children's poet. His poems, of which "Silver" is one of the most frequently anthologized, are known for their imagery and sound devices.

### Claude McKay

One of the most radical of the young black writers of the Harlem Renaissance, McKay called for pride in racial heritage. He used dialect in his early poems and then achieved prominence with the militant poem "If We Must Die."



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the use of sound patterns (rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia, assonance) in poetry. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** in the *Teacher's Manual* (p. 186) provides exercises to supplement "Jazz Fantasia" and "Starfish."

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Using selected lyrics of popular music as a basis for discussion, have students describe the sound patterns of the words. Which sounds rhyme? Which are repeated? Do the sounds of any words imitate their meanings?

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section emphasizes that poets, like musicians, are sensitive to the ways sound reveals meaning and emotion. Encourage students to think about how sound contributes to meaning as they read the following poems.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read these poems, margin annotations will aid you in presenting the uses of sound patterns in poetry.

# SOUND PATTERNS

"To take sound away from poetry," said one poet, "is like tearing the wings from a bird." Poets, like musicians, are sensitive to the effects of sound. By varying rhythms, they can excite different emotions in the reader. They may use harsh or melodious sounds to convey a particular mood. Rhyme and other devices of repetition can make a poem pleasant, forceful, or comic. In combination, these devices can give a poem a rich texture of sound, which is pleasurable in itself and which also enhances the poem's meaning.

## The Destruction of Sennacherib

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

Sennacherib (sĭ-nāk'ər-ĭb) was king of the ancient Assyrians. His story is told in the Bible, *II Kings 19:35*. Sennacherib led an army against Jerusalem, in hopes of conquering that city. But the night before his troops were to attack, "the angel of the Lord went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp; when morning dawned, they all lay dead."

### The Destruction of Sennacherib

1

**Simile.** Compares Sennacherib to wolf and people of Jerusalem to flock of sheep; image of helpless sheep cared for by the Lord, their shepherd, is frequently used in Bible.

2

**Parallelism.** First and third lines, second and fourth lines are structurally similar, but opposite in meaning.

3

**What destroyed Sennacherib's army?** "Angel of Death."

1 The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,<sup>o</sup>  
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;  
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,  
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

1. **fold:** flock of sheep, or place where sheep are kept.

2 Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:  
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,  
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.<sup>o</sup>

5

8. **strown:** strewn, scattered.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,<sup>o</sup>  
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;  
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed<sup>o</sup> deadly and chill,

10

9. **blast:** wind.

11. **waxed:** grew.

3 And their hearts but once heaved, and forever grew still!

## PRESENTATION

Explain to students that this poem is especially challenging. Have students read the headnote. You may want to add that the Assyrians had already destroyed several other cities, and Sennacherib had sent letters boasting he would

overthrow Jerusalem next.

Give attention to vocabulary before the first oral reading. Several words are explained in the margins, and others (*cohorts*, *sheen*, *host*, *distorted*, and *unsmote*) are defined in the *Teacher's Manual* (p. 184).

Then proceed with the first reading of the poem. Point out the power of the **rhythm**, **imagery**, and **diction** as you read each stanza aloud.



*Destruction of Sennacherib's Host* by Gustave Doré (1832–1883). Etching.

★ For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 40 / Selection Test 35 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 36

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

This Doré etching shows a similar view of the events that Byron's poem describes. Both works capture the harsh reality of death. Byron's imagery, especially in stanzas 3–5, matches the harshness of Doré's blacks, whites, and grays.

### About the Artist

Doré was a French sculptor, engraver, painter, and illustrator. He is best known for his illustrations, particularly those depicting strange, fantastic action. He illustrated many of the classics of Western literature and the Bible, often using engraving techniques.

4  
What do deaths of one horse and one rider (l. 17) represent? Deaths of all horses and riders.

5  
Rhythm. Regularity and power of beat suggest strength of Lord, against whom army of Sennacherib is powerless.

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. "Like the wolf on the fold" and "like stars on the sea."  
1b. At sunset Assyrians were like leaves of a summer forest, next day like fallen leaves of autumn.  
2a. Responses will vary. Sample: Stanza 1—The Angel of Death destroys Assyrians. Stanza 2—Assyrian war horse lies dead on the ground. Stanza 3—Rider of horse also dead. Assyrians' tents are quiet. Stanza 4—Assyrian widows now cry out. Assyrians have been destroyed, not in battle, but by stroke of God.  
2b. Speaker gives vivid images of death, reminiscent of war, then tells us destruction was caused not by war or man but by the Lord.

#### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Four.  
2. Lines 6 and 8 have more stressed syllables.  
3. Swift, regular meter suggests steady onward movement of "Angel of Death" and of poem's action.

4 And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,  
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;  
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf, 15  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,  
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:  
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,  
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown. 20

And the widows of Ashur° are loud in their wail,  
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;°

5 And the might of the Gentile,° unmote by the sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

21. **Ashur** (ā'shōōr'): Assyria.  
22. **Baal** (bā'al): chief Assyrian god.  
23. **Gentile**: non-Jew; here, the Assyrian Sennacherib.

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. What similes in the first stanza help you picture the power of the Assyrians? b. How is the change in their power described in the second stanza?

2. The destruction of the Assyrians is related in detail in stanzas 3–6. a. Tell in your own words what each stanza describes. b. How does each stanza build toward the climax of the poem?

### Literary Elements

#### Rhythm and Meter

**Rhythm** occurs everywhere in nature: in the phases of the moon, in the tides, in the beating of our hearts. And rhythm has always had a profound effect on human beings. From the earliest times, people have sung, danced, chanted, and made music out of an instinctive love of rhythm.

The rhythm of a poem may be compared to a person's heartbeat. Rhythm may beat slowly, swiftly, or irregularly, but it gives movement and vitality to the poem. In English poetry, rhythm is based on a pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables. The stressed syllables are marked ' and the unstressed syllables ~.

When the rhythm of a poem has a regular and pronounced pattern, we call it **meter**. The metrical pattern in "The Destruction of Sennacherib" looks like this:

The Assýriān came down like the wólφ on the fólđ,  
And his cóhórts wére gleāming in púrple and gólđ;

Two unstressed syllables are followed by a stressed syllable. How many stressed syllables do you find in each line? Analyze the meter of lines 5–8. What variety has Byron introduced in the pattern?

Byron has chosen a swift meter for this poem. Why is such a meter appropriate to his subject?



## PRESENTATION

For Study and Discussion question 1 contains helpful reminders of the relationships between jazz, the blues, and rock music. You may want to play recordings of each kind of music. Find out what students know about improvisation and

jam sessions, both common in twentieth-century music. Then define *fantasia*: a musical composition without a fixed form; its structure is invented by the composer.

After an oral reading of the poem, focus on its diction. Ask students to explain how a saxo-

phone could “sob” (exaggerated tremolo) or a trombone “ooze” (slide). Ask what instruments students would use for ll. 6–9 and 12–15. The reference to “happy tin pans,” explained in the notes, is reminiscent of Tin Pan Alley, a district associated with popular music. Explain the slang

# Jazz Fantasia

CARL SANDBURG

*Read this poem aloud and listen to its sounds. What are some of its particularly effective sound devices? How does Sandburg convey the character of individual instruments?*

1 Drum on your drums, batter on your banjos,

2 sob on the long cool winding saxophones.

Go to it, O jazzmen.

Sling your knuckles on the bottoms of the happy

3 tin pans,<sup>5</sup> let your trombones ooze, and go husha-  
husha-hush with the slippery sandpaper.<sup>6</sup>

5

4 Moan like an autumn wind high in the lonesome treetops, moan soft like

5 you wanted somebody terrible, cry like a racing car slipping away from a  
motorcycle cop, bang-bang! you jazzmen, bang altogether drums, traps,<sup>9</sup>  
banjos, horns, tin cans—make two people fight on top of a stairway and  
scratch each other's eyes in a clinch tumbling down the stairs.

10

6 Can the rough stuff . . . now a Mississippi steamboat pushes up the night  
river with a hoo-hoo-hoo-oo . . . and the green lanterns calling to the  
high soft stars . . . a red moon rides on the humps of the low river  
hills . . . go to it, O jazzmen.

15

5. **tin pans:** In early years jazz players often improvised instruments, using tin pans, coconuts, or anything else that could make interesting sounds. 6. **slippery sandpaper:** Sandpaper, too, was used as an instrument. 9. **traps:** percussion instruments.

## Jazz Fantasia

1

Poet's use of **rhythm** and sound here connects him to jazz musician; poet is musician of words instead of musical notes.

2

“Sob” suggests poet understands and reacts subjectively to emotion of jazzmen.

3

**Onomatopoeia.** Words *ooze* and *husha-husha-hush* sound like the instruments.

4

**Assonance.** Repetition of long o sound creates mood of sadness and loneliness.

5

In this and next stanza, poet will tell jazzmen kinds of sounds he wants them to produce—sounds that he is also recreating through words of his poem.

6

*How does the mood of the poem change in this stanza?* Switches from one of turbulence to one of serenity, as shown in softer **imagery** and onomatopoeic shift from “bang-bang” to “hoo-hoo-hoo-oo.”

"can the rough stuff." In this context, *can* means "stop." You might conclude by having students complete the **Vocabulary Activity** on p. 186 of the *Teacher's Manual*.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Relating Expression Skills

Arrange a simulated jazz show for the class and then ask them to recreate the sounds they hear in poems of their own. You may play a tape or record or have musicians in your class bring their instruments (others can join in on tin pans as in the poem). Providing lighting like that pictured in this photograph of a jazz musician will make your simulation more real.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Possible answers include "batter on your banjos," "sling your knuckles," "bang-bang! you jazzmen," and "two people fight . . . and / scratch each other's eyes." 1b. Possible answers include "high soft stars" and "red moon rides on the . . . low river hills."

2a. Speaker asks the musicians to change mood and to imitate steamboat, lanterns, stars, or moon with improvisations.

2b. Just as jazz fantasia has no form but that invented by composer, poem does not have a fixed form of meter, rhyme, or stanza structure.

3a. Irregular rhythm in poem corresponds to changing rhythms of jazz improvisation. 3b. Responses will vary. Rhythm changes from banjos to saxophones (ll. 1–2); from percussion instruments to wind (ll. 5–6); from siren to "bang-bang" (ll. 8–9); and from fight to steamboat (ll. 11–12).



### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Father of the blues and grandfather of rock music, jazz came into being in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Freer and livelier than traditional music, it created a new style and influenced modern composers.

a. What images in the poem convey the intensity and roughness of jazz? b. What images indicate that jazz can be soft and serene as well?

2. The word *fantasia* in the title refers to a musical composition without a fixed form. Its structure is invented by the composer. Jazz is often created by improvisation. a. How does the last stanza give the impression of being improvised? b. In what way is the poem like a "jazz fantasia"?

3. Unlike "The Destruction of Sennacherib," this poem has an irregular rhythm. a. Why is irregular rhythm appropriate? b. At what points in the poem can you feel the rhythm change?

## PRESENTATION

Call attention to the headnote's reference to El Dorado as originally being a wealthy kingdom and tell students that, appropriately, this poem was written in 1849—the year of the Gold Rush.

Ask students whether the knight in the poem was seeking a land of gold or an ideal. His gallantry will lead most to answer an ideal. Ask students to define *ideal*. Focus on Poe's "Eldorado" as symbolic of the ideal (see *Teacher's Manual*, p. 188). Ask students to speculate

about the ideal that Eldorado might represent and to comment about why we might try to reach an unattainable ideal.

# Eldorado

EDGAR ALLAN POE

*During the sixteenth century, many explorers came to the New World in search of El Dorado, the legendary kingdom of fabulous wealth. The name El Dorado has come to have another meaning—that of an unattainable ideal.*

1 Gaily bedight,<sup>o</sup>  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow,  
Had journeyed long,  
Singing a song,  
In search of Eldorado.

2 But he grew old—  
This knight so bold—  
And o'er his heart a shadow  
Fell as he found  
No spot of ground.  
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength  
Failed him at length,  
He met a pilgrim<sup>o</sup> shadow—  
"Shadow," said he,  
"Where can it be—  
This land; of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains  
Of the Moon,  
3 Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
Ride, boldly ride,"  
The shade<sup>o</sup> replied—  
4 "If you seek for Eldorado!"

1. **bedight**: dressed. 15. **pilgrim**: wanderer.  
23. **shade**: ghost.

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Detail from *The Departure* (1837) by Thomas Cole (1801–1848). Oil on canvas.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

- The first two stanzas of this poem tell how the knight grew old on his quest. What is about to happen to the knight near the end of the poem?
- a. What pair of rhyming words is repeated in each stanza? b. Does the word *shadow* mean exactly the same thing in each stanza? Explain.
- The shade's reply to the knight is mysterious. What is the shade telling the knight about his quest for Eldorado?

## Eldorado

1 **Imagery.** Description suggests knight's eagerness and optimism at beginning of quest for wealth. Contrasts with imagery of second stanza that suggests knight's doubt and disappointment.

2 **Assonance.** The darkened mood suggested by long o sounds heightens knight's growing disillusionment with quest.

3 **To what does "Shadow" refer in this stanza?** Death.

4 **Repetition.** Last line of each stanza refers to unattainable ideal of Eldorado.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

**About the Artwork**  
*The Departure* reflects Cole's interest in themes of rising and falling civilizations and the mutability of human life. The composition of the painting emphasizes the quest of the horsemen.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- He is about to die.
- a. Shadow and Eldorado.  
b. In first stanza, *shadow* is darkness. In second stanza, it is doubt or disappointment. In third stanza, it is a ghost. In last stanza, it is death.
- Shade may be telling knight that end of his search is death, that Eldorado is unattainable.



## PRESENTATION

If your students remember reading Ogden Nash's "The Lama," "The Octopus," "The Panther," or "The Rhinoceros," they should be ready to enjoy "Next!" by this delightful humorist. In case students desire an encore, some of his

books of verse are *Hard Lines* (1931), *The Bad Parents' Garden of Verse* (1936), *I'm a Stranger Here Myself* (1938), *Everyone But Thee and Me* (1962), and *I Wouldn't Have Missed It: Selected Poems of Ogden Nash* (1972).

A preview of the words in the footnotes will

make the reading easier and funnier. A picture of a dinosaur skeleton and information about the size of dinosaurs might help students imagine the preposterous situation of the ball in the Natural History Museum.

Read the poem aloud, or have one of your stu-

# Next!

## OGDEN NASH

*Humorous poetry often relies upon pronounced rhythms and clever rhymes. What surprising and funny rhymes can you find in this poem?*

### Next!

1

**Diction.** The frequent use of such serious, formal, and scientific wording provides humorous contrast to ridiculous images of dancing skeletons in poem.

2

Speaker's slumbering suggests that events in poem occur in a dream.

3

Nash reminds reader of huge size of skeletons, thus emphasizing incongruity and humor of situation.

4

**End rhyme.** Exemplifies incongruity of Nash's formal rhyming couplets (two consecutive lines of poetry that rhyme) to subject of the poem. His clever rhymes contribute to humor of poem.

5

**Onomatopoeia.** "Clatter" and "rattling" recreate sounds the bones would make dancing.

6

**What do the last two lines suggest about the underlying theme of the poem?** Responses may vary. Humans may become extinct like dinosaurs.

I thought that I would like to see

The early world that used to be,

1 That mastodonic<sup>o</sup> mausoleum,<sup>o</sup>

The Natural History Museum.

On iron seat in marble bower,

2 I slumbered through the closing hour.

At midnight in the vasty hall

The fossils gathered for a ball.

High above notices and bulletins

3 Loomed up the Mesozoic<sup>o</sup> skeletons.

4 Aroused by who knows what elixirs,

They ground along like concrete mixers.

They bowed and scraped in reptile pleasure,

And then began to tread the measure.

There were no drums or saxophones,

5 But just the clatter of their bones,

A rolling, rattling, carefree circus

Of mammoth polkas and mazurkas.

Pterodactyls<sup>o</sup> and brontosauruses<sup>o</sup>

Sang ghostly prehistoric choruses.

Amid the megalosauric<sup>o</sup> wassail<sup>o</sup>

I caught the eye of one small fossil.

6 Cheer up, old man, he said, and winked—

It's kind of fun to be extinct.

3. **mastodonic** (mās'tā-dōn'ik): referring to certain extinct elephantlike mammals. **mausoleum** (mō'sā-lē'əm): here, a large building that houses animal remains. 10. **Mesozoic** (mēz'ā-zō'ik): in prehistoric times, the age of reptiles. 19. **Pterodactyls** (tēr'ā-dāk'tilz): flying reptiles. **brontosauruses** (brōn'tā-sōr'əs-əs): plant-eating dinosaurs. 21. **megalosauric** (mēg'ā-lā-sōr'ik): The megalosaurus was a meat-eating dinosaur. **wassail** (wōs'əl): here, a revel or festivity.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 41 / Selection Test 35 / Vocabulary Test 19 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 37

dents read it, to emphasize the humorous rhyme and rhythm. The **For Study and Discussion** questions will point out other sources of incongruity and humor in the poem. Call attention to the last two lines of the poem and relate the “small fossil” to that in the photograph on p. 341.



## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. In medieval times, people believed that there was a substance called the “elixir of life,” which could give eternal life. What humorous use does Nash make of this idea in the poem?
2. Polkas and mazurkas are lively dances that require agility and lightness of movement. Why is it particularly comical to have these dances performed by “Mesozoic skeletons”?

3. Nash is known for his clever and humorous rhymes. He often pairs words in unusual and unexpected combinations. For example, in lines 19–20, Nash rhymes *brontosaurus* with *choruses*. Find other examples of comic rhymes in the poem.

4. What lines in the poem suggest that the narrator is dreaming?
5. What do you think the title means?

## Literary Elements

### Rhyme and Rhyme Scheme

**Rhyme** is the correspondence of sounds in words or phrases that appear close to each other in a poem. Most rhymes are **end rhymes**, that is, the rhyme occurs on final syllables:

Gaily bedight  
A gallant knight

Find other examples of end rhyme in Poe’s poem.

Sometimes rhyme occurs within a line of poetry:

The splendor *falls* on castle *walls*.

This is called **internal rhyme**.

One reason a poet uses rhyme is to give a poem structure. Usually rhyme words are arranged in a pattern called a **rhyme scheme**. Consider the pattern in the first stanza of “Eldorado”:

Gaily bedight,	a
A gallant knight,	a
In sunshine and in shadow,	b
Had journeyed long,	c
Singing a song,	c
In search of Eldorado.	b

This stanza has an *aabccb* rhyme scheme (each new rhyme is indicated by a different letter of the alphabet). In which stanza does the rhyme scheme change? Look at “The Destruction of Sennacherib” (page 334). What is the rhyme scheme of the first two stanzas?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The mounted fossil portrayed here suggests the “small fossil” referred to in ll. 22–24 of Nash’s poem. Birdlike in appearance, this creature seems poised, even in fossil form, for quick and humorous movements such as winking.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Strange elixir has brought prehistoric animals to life.
2. To have such large creatures perform these dances is incongruous and hilarious.
3. Students may cite rhymes in ll. 11–12, 17–18, 21–22, and 23–24.
4. Line 6.
5. Responses will vary. At rate human beings are going, they may follow the dinosaurs into extinction.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Lines 19–20 of “Eldorado” depart from rhyme scheme.
2. Rhyme scheme is *aabb ccdd*.

## PRESENTATION

You may want to bring, or ask a student to bring, a conch shell so that all students may hear the sounds of the sea. Have students describe what they hear. This activity will prepare students for the imaginative description of a similar experi-

ence in Stephens' poem.

An oral reading of the poem will enable students to appreciate the sounds created by the poet's use of **onomatopoeia**, **alliteration**, **assonance**, and **rhyme**.

Be sure students understand the definitions of

these devices and can find and explain examples of them in Stephens' poem.

After students have read the poem, have them comment on what the **speaker** imagined from the murmuring of the shell and what contribution sound **imagery** makes to the **mood** of the poem.

### The Shell

1

*What does the narrator hear when he presses the shell to his ear? How do these sounds affect him?* Sealike sounds lead speaker into imaginary, strange, and forbidding scene.

2

**Imagery.** Sound imagery is reinforced by **alliteration** of *s* sounds. **Onomatopoeia** of "murmur" suggests wavelike swishing, lonely sounds of sea.

3

Images in ll. 9–11 create a mood of sadness and loneliness.

4

*What sounds in ll. 15–21 create this mood of sadness and loneliness?* Dominant sounds of *w*, *r*, and long *o* extend the mood; "hollow sound" and unpleasant **imagery** emphasize desolation and absence of humanity.

5

Time itself stands still: it is always twilight, and no familiar lights appear in sky.

6

**Assonance.** Short *i* sounds in this line quicken pace of poem to suggest speaker's eagerness for relief from unpleasant experience.

7

Speaker is relieved when he takes shell from ear and returns to a happier reality.

# The Shell

JAMES STEPHENS

*As you read this poem aloud, can you hear the sounds of the wind and the sea?*

- 1 And then I pressed the shell  
Close to my ear  
And listened well,  
And straightway like a bell  
Came low and clear 5
- 2 The slow, sad murmur of the distant seas,  
Whipped by an icy breeze  
Upon a shore
- 3 Wind-swept and desolate.  
It was a sunless strand<sup>10</sup> that never bore  
The footprint of a man,  
Nor felt the weight  
Since time began  
Of any human quality or stir
- 4 Save what the dreary winds and waves incur.<sup>15</sup>  
And in the hush of waters was the sound  
Of pebbles rolling round,  
Forever rolling with a hollow sound.  
And bubbling seaweeds as the waters go  
Swish to and fro 20  
Their long, cold tentacles of slimy gray.
- 5 There was no day,  
Nor ever came a night  
Setting the stars alight  
To wonder at the moon: 25  
Was twilight only and the frightened croon,<sup>26</sup>
- 6 Smitten<sup>27</sup> to whimpers, of the dreary wind  
And waves that journeyed blind—
- 7 And then I loosed<sup>29</sup> my ear . . . O, it was sweet  
To hear a cart go jolting down the street. 30

10. **strand**: beach. 15. **incur**: here, cause. 26. **croon**: a murmuring sound.  
27. **Smitten**: struck. 29. **loosed**: moved away.





## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. Describe the place that the speaker imagines as he holds the seashell to his ear.  
b. What is the only sound of life? c. What other sounds does he hear?

2a. In lines 22–28, what strange and forbidding images are we given of this place?  
b. How does the mood of the poem suddenly change in lines 29–30?

3. The speaker brings us closer to his experience by using words whose sounds suggest the whistling wind, the rush of waves, and the murmur of the sea. a. Find examples of words whose sounds echo the sounds of the wind and the sea. b. What sounds are repeated most often?

## Literary Elements

### Onomatopoeia, Alliteration, and Assonance

One technique that is commonly used by poets is **onomatopoeia** (ŏn'ə-măt'ə-pē'ə), in which the sound of a word imitates a natural sound.

For example, the word *crack* sounds like something cracking.

- 1 Which word in line 6 of “The  
2 Shell” is onomatopoetic? Which other words in the poem are onomatopoetic?

Sometimes a poet creates special sound effects by **alliteration**—the repetition of consonant sounds, usually at the beginning of words. Many familiar expressions employ alliteration: *wild* and *wooly*, *sweet sixteen*, *through*

- 3 *thick* and *thin*. Find an example of alliteration in the poem and explain its effect.

The name **assonance** is sometimes used for the repetition of vowel sounds. Assonance occurs in line 27:

Smitten to whippers, of the dreary wind

- 4 How does the assonance in lines 17–18 echo the meaning of those lines?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The large spiral shell pictured in the foreground of this photograph is a conch shell. The conch is a mollusk that lives in tropical waters, especially near southern Florida and the West Indies. The meat may be used for food; the shell is used in ornaments, buttons, and even musical instruments. The conch shell is known for the humming sealike sounds one hears when the shell is held close to the ear.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Distant shore, “Wind-swept and desolate.” 1b. Swish of tentacles of seaweeds. 1c. Wind, waves, and rolling of pebbles.

2a. Images of a twilight without day, night, stars, or moon, with the croon and whimper of the dreary wind and “waves.”

2b. When speaker takes shell from his ear, he is relieved and glad to hear a cart moving along street.

3a. Examples are found in ll. 6–7, 16–21, and 26–27. 3b. Some repeated sounds are *s*, *sl*, *w*, *wh*, *t*, *h*, *r*, *sw*, the *u* sound in *murmur*, the *i* in *distant*, the long *e*, the long *o*, the *a* in *waters*, the *oo* in *croon*.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. *Murmur*.

2. *Whipped*, *hush*, *rolling*, *hollow bubbling*, *swish*, *croon*, *whimpers*, *jolting*.

3. Answers will vary. Alliteration of *s* in “slow, sad . . . seas” in l. 6 evokes sounds of sea.

4. Answers will vary. Repetition of *o* sound in ll. 17–18 (“rolling,” “round,” “hollow,” “sound”) evokes continuous, monotonous sounds of pebbles in sea.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

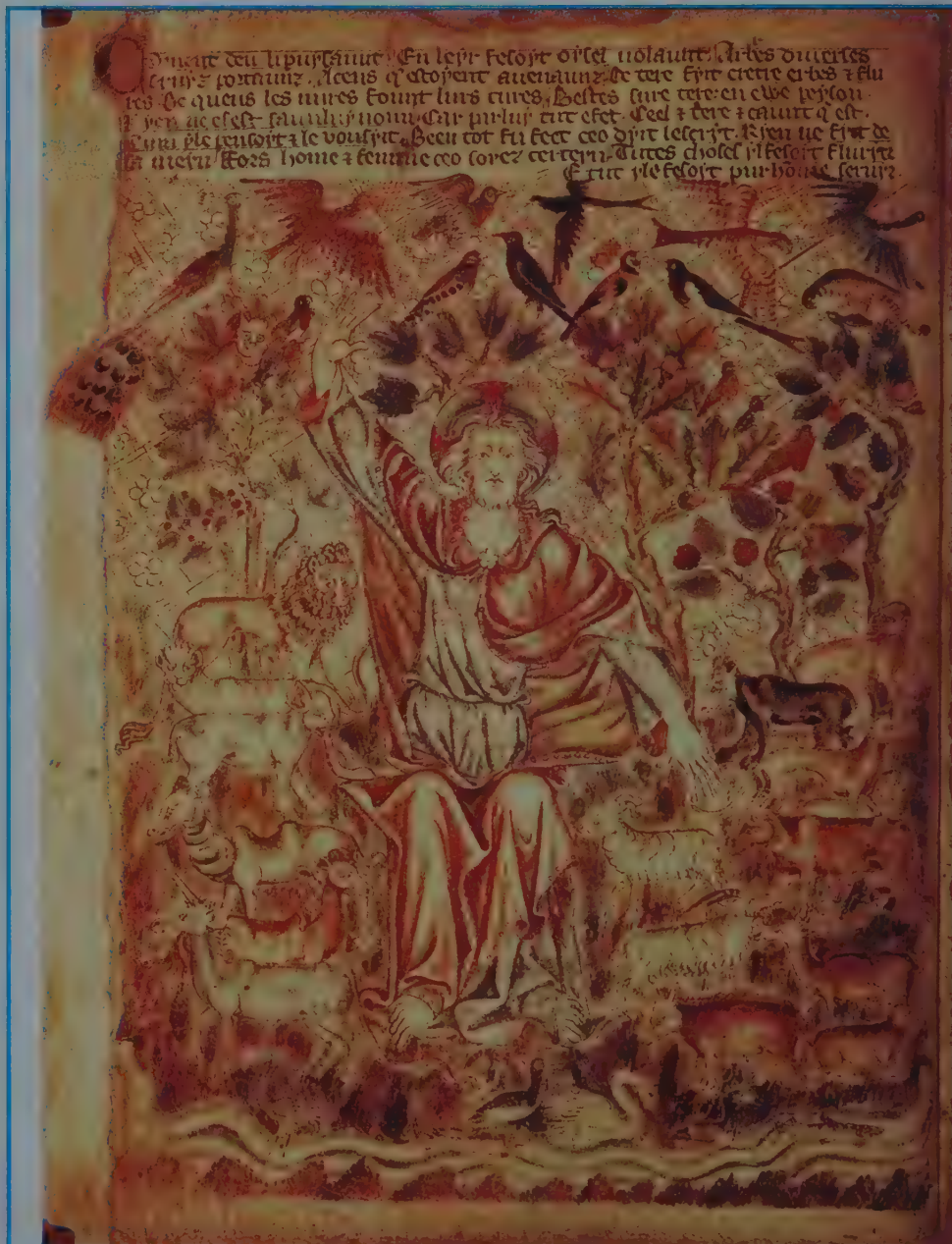
Scientists have identified nearly one million kinds of animals, of which about two dozen are depicted in the illustration. The earliest systematic classification of animals was done by Aristotle (384–322 B.C.). In the eighteenth century, Swedish naturalist Carlus Linnaeus (1707–1778) grouped plants and animals according to species and structure, the method that is used today.

### About the Artwork

The lack of perspective, limited colors, and stylized, geometric background suggest that the illustration dates from the Middle Ages. Many animals that are familiar to us because of circuses, zoos, and motion pictures were virtually unknown in medieval times, except through rumor and fantasy. Reports of strange, mythological beasts from Africa and the East were mixed with what little scientific knowledge was available. Note the elephant (left of center) with its equine hooves and the monkey (right of center) shown walking on all fours. The unicorn (lower left) was probably based on hearsay accounts of the rhinoceros.

### Relating Expression Skills

Students might research a particular animal and deliver a report on it before the class. Animals chosen could range from house pets to favorite animals from the zoo to exotic animals that the students have never seen but would like to see.



God Creating the Animals from an undated German manuscript.

The British Library

## PRESENTATION

Explain to students that the language of the original text of the Old Testament was classical Hebrew except for a few short passages in Aramaic; the language of the New Testament was Greek. The Bible has been translated into nearly

all languages of the world. King James I ordered this English translation, which required the work of fifty-four scholars and churchmen for seven years (1604–1611).

In Psalms, one of the poetic devices most frequently used is **parallelism**, which contributes

to the musical quality of the verses. As the headnote explains, parallelism is the repetition of phrases or sentences that are similar in structure or meaning. To demonstrate the musical quality of Psalms, you may want to play a recorded reading of one of them or have students prepare a

# Psalm 96

## from *The King James Bible*

*In addition to such devices as rhyme and rhythm, poets make use of parallelism—the repetition of phrases or sentences that are similar in structure or meaning. Note how this poet achieves balance and emphasis through parallel structure.*

- 1 O sing unto the Lord a new song:  
Sing unto the Lord, all the earth.  
Sing unto the Lord, bless his name;
- 2 Show forth his salvation from day to day.  
Declare his glory among the heathen, 5  
His wonders among all people.  
For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: 7  
He is to be feared above all gods.
- 3 For all the gods of the nations are idols:  
But the Lord made the heavens. 16 10  
Honor and majesty are before him:  
Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. 12
- 4 Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of people,  
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.  
Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: 15  
Bring an offering, and come into his courts.  
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:  
Fear before him, all the earth.
- 5 Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth:  
The world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: 20  
He shall judge the people righteously.
- 6 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof.  
Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:  
Then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice 25  
Before the Lord: for he cometh,  
For he cometh to judge the earth:
- 7 He shall judge the world with righteousness,  
And the people with his truth.

## Psalm 96

1  
**Parallelism.** Parallel syntax emphasizes significance of request to praise the Lord.

2  
*What does the psalmist say people should praise? Why?*  
Lord's salvation, glory, and wonders should be praised because "the Lord is great."

3  
All others who claim to be "gods" are imposters.

4  
**Parallelism.** Lines 13–15 are parallel to emphasize glory that the Lord deserves.

5  
Example of archaic diction: *reigneth*.

6  
The rejoicing of people implied by the singing in ll. 1–3 is extended to all nature (universe) in ll. 22–25.

7  
Rejoicing is prelude to coming of the Lord on Judgment Day, a happy occasion for psalmist.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 42 / Selection Test 35 / Vocabulary Test 19 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 38



choral reading of this one.

After students have read Psalm 96, you might ask them to point out examples of archaic language—words no longer used in speech except for special purposes. Have them speculate why many people still prefer reading the archaic lan-

guage rather than the modern language in some contemporary translations of the Bible.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** They are parallel in structure and meaning, each calling for people to sing to the Lord.

**1b.** Lines 4–6 are parallel in structure and in meaning to show wonders of the Lord.

**2a.** Lord is great, powerful above all heathen idols; he is creator of heavens, with honor, majesty, strength, and beauty all about him. **2b.** By giving him glory and strength, giving an offering, coming into his realm, worshipping him, and proclaiming among heathen that the Lord rules.

**3a.** Heavens and earth will be glad, sea will roar, fields and everything in them will rejoice.

**3b.** Parallel structure of nature imagery emphasizes whole world will rejoice in coming of the Lord.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Other examples are in ll. 1–3, 5–6, and 13–15.

## EXTENDING YOUR STUDY

Since numerous translations of the Bible are available, student analyses will vary widely. Although certain words and sentence patterns in *The King James Bible* may prove difficult, this translation is the most “musical.” If possible, bring to class a good recording of the Psalms, or have students find recordings of the Psalms they analyzed and bring them to class.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

**1a.** How are the first three lines of Psalm 96 similar in meaning and in structure? **b.** How are lines 4–6 alike?

**2a.** What reasons does the poet give for praising the Lord? **b.** According to the poet, in what ways can people praise the Lord?

**3.** The ancient Hebrew poets were fond of using images from nature. **a.** According to this poet, how will nature respond to the knowledge of God? **b.** How does the poet use nature imagery to build to a joyful climax?

## Literary Elements

### Parallelism

One of the devices most frequently used in the poetry of the Psalms is **parallelism**—the repetition of phrases or sentences that are similar in meaning or in structure. Look, for example, at lines 22–24:

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof.

Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:

The three lines are related in meaning; they call for universal rejoicing. The lines are also parallel in structure: each line is broken in the middle by a comma, and each begins with the words *let the*. The structure of the lines also gives rise to a parallel rhythm, so that the lines seem to balance and echo one another. This rhythmic parallelism gives the lines a special emphasis when they are read aloud. **1** What other examples of parallelism can you find in the Psalm?

Because of its often stirring emotional impact, parallelism has been used in diverse forms of literature. You are probably familiar with this famous example of parallelism in “The Gettysburg Address”: “government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

## Extending Your Study

### Analyzing a Psalm

Choose one of the Psalms in the Bible and analyze its musical devices. Some of the best-known Psalms are 23, 24, and 121.

## PRESENTATION

To introduce this poem, have students list objects that they associate with the seashore. Most students will probably include starfish. Point out that these little animals often wash up on shore. Call attention to the picture of a starfish. Encour-

age students to visualize the starfish on shore as you read the poem aloud. Remind students that sound contributes to meaning; point out that the s sound is often used in describing the sea. Ask them to listen for the poet's use of **alliteration** and **assonance**. Explain that the poem is a

lament for the dead starfish. The speaker is saddened by their deaths and searches for an explanation. After students have read the poem, have them locate the line that begins the shift in the **mood** of the poem.

# Starfish

**LORNA DEE CERVANTES**

*Poets often help their readers discover the world anew. How does this poem make you aware of the beauty as well as the fragility of starfish?*

- 1 They were lovely in the quartz and jasper° sand  
As if they had created terrariums with their bodies  
On purpose; adding sprigs of seaweed, seashells,  
White feathers, eel bones, miniature  
Mussels, a fish jaw. Hundreds; no—  
Thousands of baby stars. We touched them,  
Surprised to find them soft, pliant, almost  
Living in their attitudes. We would dry them, arrange them,  
Form seascapes, geodesics° . . . We gathered what we could  
2 In the approaching darkness. Then we left hundreds of  
3 Thousands of flawless five-fingered specimens sprawled  
4 Along the beach as far as we could see, all massed  
Together: little martyrs, soldiers, artless° suicides  
5 In lifelong liberation from the sea. So many  
Splayed° hands, the tide shoveled in.

1. **jasper**: of a reddish, yellow, or brown color.

5

9. **geodesics** (jē'ə-dēs'iks): in interlocking patterns.

10

13. **artless**: simple, innocent.

15

15. **Splayed**: spread out.

## Starfish

1

**Imagery.** Striking, colorful images suggest natural environment of starfish.

2

The approaching darkness fore-shadows speaker's darkening mood as she realizes that the starfish are not just dried things for a terrarium; they are living creatures that have died, and their deaths are unpleasant.

3

Here speaker temporarily takes clinical attitude toward starfish.

4

Speaker recognizes tremendous waste of so many helpless, dead starfish.

5

*What have been liberated from the sea? What is ironic about the phrase "lifelong liberation from the sea"? The hundreds of thousands of starfish. Liberation, or freedom, is usually desirable, but for starfish, liberation is death; also, the sea, which is often a source of death for humans, is source of life for starfish.*

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Starfish are not really fish but spiny-skinned animals, or echinoderms. They use tiny suction cups on the underside of their arms for crawling and have mouths in the center of their bodies to eat oysters, clams, and snails.

### Relating Expression Skills

Encourage students to draw, paint, or sculpt a seashore design to accompany Cervantes' poem. Encourage them to find pictures of other types of starfish and other seashore life.



### CLOSURE

Ask students to define **rhyme**, **alliteration**, **assonance**, and **onomatopoeia** and give an example of each. How do sound devices contribute to the meaning and the mood of a poem?

### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

An earlier poem in this unit, "The Cloud," is an excellent work for analysis of sound. Have students write a brief essay analyzing the **internal** and **end rhyme**, and **alliteration** in the poem.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. In terrariums, starfish are often surrounded by seaweed, shells, feathers, bones.

2. Focuses on beauty of starfish.

3a. *Specimens* suggests things preserved in laboratories; word carries negative connotation because things preserved in specimen jars are dead. 3b. Sad image of mass burial. 3c. Shift in attitude from wonder about beauty of starfish to horror about deaths of so many.

4a. Poet uses alliteration, assonance, and parallelism. 4b. Alliteration in ll. 3, 4–5, 6–7, 11, 12–13; assonance in ll. 3–4, 9, 11, and 12–13. Parallelism in ll. 3–5, 8–9, and 13.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**George Gordon, Lord Byron**

Byron's life was full of contrasts. He was a freethinker and a Deist plagued by a sense of guilt for his various actions; he was a Romantic influenced by Neoclassicism. He flaunted his noble ancestry but championed the cause of oppressed peoples, as in the militant yet idealistic "The Destruction of Sennacherib."

**Carl Sandburg**

A devotee of Walt Whitman, Sandburg also strove to be a poet of the people and of democracy. His poetry reflects the folklore, history, and speech rhythms of the people he observed, especially in the Midwest. Sandburg attained great popularity, but not the great literary respect given his contemporary Robert Frost.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. A terrarium is a small enclosure where plants or animals are grown. Why does the poet associate terrariums with the starfish?

2. What characteristics of the starfish does the poet focus on in the first ten lines?

3a. What are the connotations of the word *specimens* in line 11? b. What is the effect of the words *sprawled* (line 11) and *shoveled in* (line 15)? c. How do these words signal a shift in attitude?

4a. What sound devices does the poet use?

b. Where are these devices used for emphasis?

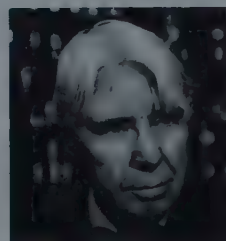
## About the Authors

### George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788–1824)



George Gordon, Lord Byron has been called "the most interesting personality in the history of the world." He was a dashing, rebellious genius, as famous for the scandals he was involved in as for his poems. When he was a student at Cambridge, he objected to a rule prohibiting students from keeping dogs. He protested by buying a bear—an animal not prohibited—to keep as a pet. His rebelliousness alienated him from many of his peers, and he left England forever in 1816. Thereafter, he devoted himself to various international revolutionary causes. He became an officer in the Greek revolutionary army which sought independence for Greece from Turkish rule. However, he never participated in the revolution, for shortly after he arrived in Greece, at the age of thirty-six, he died of a fever. Byron created not only a body of enduring poetry but also a legend and a new kind of hero: the young rebel.

### Carl Sandburg (1878–1967)



Carl Sandburg, the son of Swedish immigrant parents, had to quit school at thirteen to help support his family. He held almost every kind of job—from washing soda bottles to harvesting



Have students write an essay comparing and contrasting the treatment of sea life in "The Shell" and "Starfish."

Encourage students to read other poems by these authors or other poems famous for their musical effects, such as Gwendolyn Brooks's

"We Real Cool" or A. E. Housman's "With Rue My Heart Is Laden."

Ask students to research and report on biographical information about major jazz figures.

Encourage students to find information about the Dead Sea Scrolls or bring to class various

translations of the Psalms. Students might compare translations and determine which is their favorite.

Ask students to compose an invocation or litany in parallel structure. (See the *Teacher's Manual*, p. 193, for sample and instructions.)

wheat. At the start of the Spanish-American War in 1898, he joined the army. After the war, he returned to his native Illinois where he worked as a firefighter to put himself through college. Later, he worked in politics and as a reporter. His ramblings across the country, his wide experience in working with ordinary people, and his deep interest in America's past combined to make him a poet who celebrated everyday life and average people. An author of children's books and a historian as well as a poet, Sandburg won a Pulitzer Prize in 1940 for his biography of Abraham Lincoln, and another Pulitzer Prize in 1950 for his *Complete Poems*.

#### Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849)

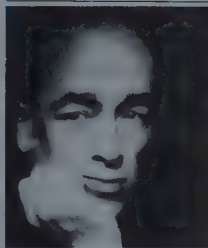
For a biography of Poe, see page 103.

#### Ogden Nash (1902–1971)



Before Ogden Nash began writing poetry, he was a schoolteacher, a salesman, and a copywriter for a publisher. After his first poem was accepted by *The New Yorker* in 1931, he joined the staff of the magazine and turned to writing as a full-time career. Nash is generally acknowledged to be America's foremost humorous poet. He published more than twenty books of poetry and prose. He also collaborated with S. J. Perelman on the libretto for *One Touch of Venus*, a musical comedy.

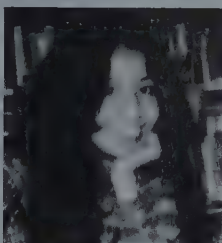
#### James Stephens (1882–1950)



James Stephens lacked a formal education, but through his own reading he made himself an authority on art and folk music, as well as a successful novelist and poet. His first success was a book of

fairy stories, *The Crock of Gold*. All of his writing is full of fantasy and deep imagination. Stephens could hold a group spellbound for hours with Irish stories, legends, and poetry.

#### Lorna Dee Cervantes (1954– )



Lorna Dee Cervantes is a Chicana writer who lives in San Jose, California. Her poems have appeared in several periodicals, including *The Latin American Literary Review*. "Starfish" is from

her first book, *Emplumada*. The title is a combination of two words: *emplumado*, which means "plumage," and *plumada*, which means "pen flourish."

#### Edgar Allan Poe

Critics have difficulty separating the facts of Poe's life from the legends and half-truths about him as a neurotic genius. His inner conflict between the physical and spiritual, the real and ideal, is present in "Eldorado," written to show that the pursuit of the ideal should supplant "gold-fever."

#### Ogden Nash

Because of his frequent moves as a child, Nash described his unusual accent as "Clam chowder of the East Coast—New England with a little Savannah at odd moments." Nash began writing humorous verse in 1930 while he was working as an advertising copywriter. His themes are those of everyday life, his style reverses conventions, and his field, he says, is "the minor idiocies of humanity."

#### James Stephens

Called "the Leprechaun of Irish literature" because of his small size, Stephens combined fantasy and reality in his poetry. He acknowledged a literary debt to William Blake and claimed that "everything that is in him helps the person who can write poetry to write."

#### Lorna Dee Cervantes

Cervantes regularly contributes poetry to a variety of publications in the United States and Mexico. She is also the editor in chief of *Mango*, a Chicano literary publication, and the founder of Mango Publications. Her home is in San Jose, which is located just south of San Francisco Bay.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to show how structure contributes to the meaning of poetry. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section emphasizes the importance of matching the **stanza** form to the content of a poem. As students read the following poems, ask them to speculate on how the structure of the lines contributes to the meaning of the poems.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have completed their reading, the margin annotations will aid you in analyzing the structures of the following poems.

### The Sound of the Sea

1

**Personification.** Sea is personified; tide's rising is described metaphorically as sea's awakening.

2

**Assonance.** Long *i* sounds suggest movement of tide.

3

**What is the effect of the simile in ll. 5–8?** Rising tide becomes almost threatening, an idea reinforced by last line of poem.

4

**Analogy.** The word *so* signals transition between **octave** and **sestet** and indicates that comparison is about to be made; speaker suggests how inspiration comes by comparing it to rising tide.

5

"Beyond our reason or control" implies awe and helplessness in face of these inspirations that resemble loud noise of cataract or wind.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** to accompany "Manhole Covers" is provided on p. 197 of the *Teacher's Manual*.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to think about how changes in structure would affect some poems they have already read. What if "Moon Tiger" had been written as a limerick? What if "Next!" had been written in **free verse**?

# STRUCTURES

If a poem is to work, it must have the right kind of structure to carry it. One of the poet's most difficult tasks is to match the content of a poem to the form that is best suited for it. The basic unit of structure in most poems is the *stanza*. A stanza is any group of lines that forms a division of a poem. It may be based on the number of lines, rhyme scheme, rhythm, or other devices of repetition.

## The Sound of the Sea

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

*As you read, note how the form of this sonnet reflects the speaker's thoughts. What shift occurs at the end of line 8?*

Rhyme  
Scheme

1	a	The sea awoke at midnight from its sleep,	
	b	And round the pebbly beaches far and wide	
2	b	I heard the first wave of the rising tide	
	a	Rush onward with uninterrupted sweep;	
3	a	A voice out of the silence of the deep,	5
	b	A sound mysteriously multiplied	
	b	As of a cataract <sup>9</sup> from the mountain's side,	
	a	Or roar of winds upon a wooded steep.	
4	c	So comes to us at times, from the unknown	
	d	And inaccessible <sup>10</sup> solitudes of being,	10
	e	The rushing of the sea-tides of the soul;	
	c	And inspirations, that we deem <sup>11</sup> our own,	
	d	Are some divine foreshadowing and foreseeing	
5	e	Of things beyond our reason or control.	

9. **cataract**: huge, crashing waterfall. 10. **inaccessible**: (In'ak-sēs'-ə-bəl) impossible to reach. 11. **deem**: judge.

## PRESENTATION

In presenting this **sonnet**, emphasize that its strict form compresses the content of the poem. Explain that this poem is a **Petrarchan sonnet**, which consists of an **octave** (first eight lines) and a **sestet** (last six lines).

After the poem is read aloud, ask students what each part of the sonnet describes. Who is the **speaker**? What does the speaker hear? What **analogy** (extended comparison) does the poet draw? How does the structure of a **Petrarchan sonnet** complement its meaning?



Coast Scene, Mt. Desert (1863) by Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900). Oil on canvas.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. What sounds of the sea are described in the first eight lines of the poem?
2. In lines 9–14 Longfellow draws an **analogy**—an extended comparison. Explain this analogy in your own words.

## Literary Elements

### The Petrarchan Sonnet

One of the most popular poetic forms is the **sonnet**—a fourteen-line poem with a traditional rhyme scheme. “The Sound of the Sea” is an example of a **Petrarchan sonnet**. It consists of two parts. The first part is eight lines

long and has a rhyme scheme of *abbaabba*. It is called the **octave**, from the Latin word for “eight.” The second, six-line part usually has a *cdecde* rhyme scheme, and is called a **sestet**, from the Latin word for “six.” Where does the first sentence of the poem end? How does this strengthen the two-part division of the poem?

Sometimes in a Petrarchan sonnet the octave raises an idea that the sestet extends. In the octave of this poem, the speaker describes the sea tide as sounding awesome. In the sestet, what does he compare to the sea tide? What, according to the speaker, is the true source of our inspirations? How do the speaker's attitudes toward the sea and toward inspiration help to unify the sonnet?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Church was known for large panoramic paintings that combined the specific and the spectacular in landscapes of violence and grandeur—volcanoes, seas, icebergs, mountains. Employing a scientific accuracy in his paintings, he appealed to the public's growing interest in science as well as the exotic.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. First rush of waves on shore as tide comes in and repetition of this sound as tide continues to sweep in.
2. Responses will vary. Students should compare waking “voice” of approaching tide to rush of spiritual perceptions; just as tide is controlled by certain forces, so too are our inspirations.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

The Italian poet Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374) perfected this kind of sonnet.

1. At end of eighth line.
2. Description of the surge of inspiration in sestet builds upon description of sounds of rising tide in octave.
3. Rush of spiritual perceptions.
4. Divine power beyond human reason or control.
5. Similarity of attitudes unifies poem.



## PRESENTATION

Explain that most **sonnets** are not titled but are arranged in a sequence—frequently numbered—by the writer or by someone else. Often they are related to one another in subject matter and feelings. Shakespeare's sonnets are thought

to be addressed to people he knew well—a dark-haired woman and a cherished friend. In this poem, the **speaker**, Shakespeare, is promising to honor someone he loves by creating a lasting monument.

This sonnet is a difficult poem for ninth

graders. You will want to help them with sentence structure, vocabulary, and interpretation. You may want to define words such as *gilded*, *rime*, *besmeared*, *sluttish*, and *posterity*, and preview the words in the footnotes.

The **Shakespearean sonnet** consists of three

# Sonnet 55

**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

*Each of Shakespeare's sonnets presents an "argument" in verse. How do the first twelve lines develop the idea that this poem is a more permanent tribute than a stone monument? How do the last two lines summarize the argument?*

## Sonnet 55

1

**Quatrain.** First of three consecutive quatrains that develop speaker's belief that verse is more permanent tribute than stone monuments and statutes.

2

**What does the speaker say outlives war? Why is this so?** Poetry outlives war. War destroys statues and buildings, but poetry endures.

3

**Couplet.** Suggests that person to whom poem is addressed will "live" in this poem and be remembered until the end of time.

*Rhyme Scheme*

- |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|----|
| a | 1 | Not marble, nor the gilded monuments                    |    |
| b |   | Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rime;           |    |
| a |   | But you shall shine more bright in these contents°      |    |
| b |   | Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.       |    |
|   |   |   |    |
| c | 2 | When wasteful war shall statues overturn,               | 5  |
| d |   | And broils° root out the work of masonry,               |    |
| c |   | Nor Mars his sword° nor war's quick fire shall burn     |    |
| d |   | The living record of your memory.                       |    |
|   |   |   |    |
| e |   | 'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity°                 |    |
| f |   | Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room | 10 |
| e |   | Even in the eyes of all posterity                       |    |
| f |   | That wear this world out to the ending doom.            |    |
|   |   |   |    |
| g | 3 | So, till the judgment that yourself° arise,             |    |
| g |   | You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.            |    |

3. **these contents**: the contents of this poem. 6. **broils**: fights, brawls. 7. **Mars his sword**: Mars's sword. 9. **all-oblivious enmity**: war which sends all to oblivion. 12–13. These lines refer to the belief that the world will come to an end with a final day of judgment, when all the dead will arise. **that yourself**: when you yourself.

**quatrains** (four-line stanzas) and one **couplet** (two-line stanza). After the poem is read aloud, ask students what each part of the sonnet describes.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Each stanza of Shakespeare's sonnet is a self-contained unit of thought. **a.** What are the "marble" and "gilded monuments" referred to in line 1? **b.** How are these memorials affected by time? **c.** Why does the poet believe that his memorial is superior to stone monuments?
2. The second stanza deals with the destructiveness of "wasteful war." What is the "living record" that survives these disasters?
3. According to stanza 3, how does the poet assure his subject's immortality?
4. The word *live* is a key word in Shakespeare's sonnet. In what sense does he use the word in the last line of the poem?

## Literary Elements

### The Shakespearean Sonnet

A sonnet usually has fourteen iambic pentameter lines—that is, ten syllables with a stress on every other syllable.

Whēn wāstefūl wār shāll stātūes óvërtúrn

The Italian, or Petrarchan, form of the sonnet, as you have seen, is divided into the **octave** and the **sestet**. The structure of the Shakespearean sonnet is different. It contains three **quatrains**—four-line stanzas—and a **couplet**—a pair of rhyming lines. The rhyme scheme is *abab cdcd efef gg*. In the Petrarchan sonnet, the last six lines usually present a comment on or a summary of the argument that has been presented in the first eight lines. In the Shakespearean sonnet, by contrast, the conclusion or resolution is generally delivered in the final two lines.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Memorial statues and buildings erected in honor of a person.
- 1b. Discolored by weathering and destroyed in time of war.
- 1c. Poem will always "shine" and cannot be destroyed by sword or fire.
2. Memory speaker has of person for whom poem is intended. By extension, it is a memory that readers share when they read poem.
3. Through poem.
4. His subject will always be remembered through poem.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

The Shakespearean sonnet is sometimes called the English sonnet. You might ask students to locate other examples of this sonnet form in poetry collections.

## PRESENTATION

Discussion of some of the words will probably be necessary both before and after an oral reading. Read the poem aloud once, and, if you wish, have students work in groups to complete the **Vocabulary Activity** given on p. 197 of the

## Teacher's Manual.

Emphasize that manhole covers are not like "old electrum." Ask students how this alloy of gold and silver would look if it were "chased and scored," "Mottoed and sculptured to a turn." Help students to understand how each of these verbs

creates a visual image. The alloy would look like a fine coin or precious art object delicately etched and marked, imprinted with a motto, and perfectly formed. Being made of the gold and silver alloy, it would be extremely valuable and quite small. The object made from electrum

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

This photograph presents an excellent image of the manhole covers in the poem—"notched and whelked and pocked and smashed" and "bitten at the edges."

## Manhole Covers

1

Speaker surprises readers by suggesting beauty of something usually not considered beautiful.

2

**Simile.** Parallel comparisons in ll. 2–3 emphasize massiveness of covers.

3

**What is electrum?** Alloy of gold and silver used in classical antiquity; poet contrasts modern manhole covers with fine medals and coins of ancient times.

4

Violent treatment of covers contrasts with delicate, artistic treatment of ancient metals.

5

**Allusion.** Bethlehem, United States in this line and American in l. 13 are names of steel corporations.

6

Last six lines picture distant future when people will view manhole covers as symbols of our civilization; l. 13 ironically suggests modern American civilization, whose beauty is "cryptic."



# Manhole Covers

**KARL SHAPIRO**

*This poem may appear at first to have no particular form, but after you read it, you will find that it has a special structure of its own.*

- 1 The beauty of manhole covers—what of that?
- 2 Like medals struck by a great savage khan,  
Like Mayan calendar stones, unliftable, indecipherable,
- 3 Not like old electrum, chased and scored,<sup>o</sup>
- 4 Mottoed and sculptured to a turn,  
But notched and whelked<sup>o</sup> and pocked and smashed  
With the great company names:
- 5 Gentle Bethlehem, smiling United States.
- 6 This rustproof artifact of my street,  
Long after roads are melted away, will lie  
Sidewise in the grave of the iron-old world,  
Bitten at the edges,  
Strong with its cryptic<sup>o</sup> American,  
Its dated beauty.

2. **khan:** Asian ruler, such as Genghis Khan.

4. **chased and scored:** delicately etched and marked.

6. **whelked:** twisted.

13. **cryptic:** mysterious.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the **Teacher's Literature Companion:** Study Guide 44 / Selection Test 36 / Vocabulary Test 19 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 41



would be entirely different from the enormous manhole covers.

Ask students what the names "Bethlehem" and "United States" refer to. Some students will know that these are steel companies, but some will need to have the **allusions** explained.

Request that students describe a whelk shell. Its spiral or twisted shape enabled the poet to coin a word about steel-making. Another interesting word in the same line is *pocked*, which means "marked as if with smallpox."

You might review the elements of **simile**, **parallelism**, and **diction** before discussing Shapiro's use of **free verse**.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

**1a.** How do the comparisons in lines 2–3 of this poem make the manhole covers seem exotic and mysterious? **b.** According to the speaker, what will finally become of manhole covers? Why will they be *cryptic*?

**2.** Where in the poem do you find the devices of parallelism and simile?

**3.** Look carefully at the structure of the poem. The first eight lines describe the manhole covers, the last six comment on their significance. What kind of poem does this pattern resemble?

## Literary Elements

### Free Verse

In your reading, you have seen that not all poems are organized by stanzas, and many poems do not seem to have a fixed rhythm, rhyme scheme, or line length. This kind of poetry, called **free verse**, has become a popular form in the twentieth century. It is called free verse because no set pattern controls it. It may rhyme in some places and not in others, or not rhyme at all. Its lines may be of different lengths. It may have no dominant rhythm, or it may switch rhythms as it progresses.

Free verse enables poets to create effects that are not possible within the restrictions of a set pattern. Poets are freer to fit sounds and rhythms more closely to the meaning of a poem. They can use everyday language and natural speech rhythms. **In what ways does "Manhole Covers" illustrate these characteristics?**

The danger of free verse is that it looks easy to write, but it is actually very difficult to write well. Like other poetry, it must have structure. In free verse, with no traditional guidelines for direction, the poet must create and develop a special structure for each poem. As easy as it seems to be, free verse is considered by many poets to be the hardest kind of verse to write.

- Although there is no fixed pattern of rhythm in free verse, it sometimes uses very strong rhythms. Listen to "Manhole Covers" being read aloud. Would you call the rhythm light and graceful, or heavy? Is the rhythm appropriate to the subject? Lines that end with a stressed syllable tend to be more forceful than lines that do not. How many lines in the poem end with a stressed syllable? Poetry, free verse or otherwise, usually contains more stressed syllables than ordinary language. What lines can you find in the poem that contain many stressed syllables?

## Creative Writing

### Finding Beauty in the Commonplace

Write a poem or brief paragraph in which you describe some ordinary object so that your readers will see it in a new light and appreciate its uniqueness. To do this, you will have to look at something in a different way yourself. For example, people frequently complain that our cities are unclean and unsafe and our highways are cluttered with ugly gas stations, fast-food restaurants, and billboards. Can you find anything in such scenes as these that has a special sort of beauty people usually do not notice?

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** By comparing them to enormous medals imprinted or cast by a great savage ruler like Genghis Khan and by comparing them to Mayan calendar stones too heavy to lift and too difficult to read.

**1b.** After civilization has vanished, manhole covers will be artifacts for people of distant future to find. They will be *cryptic* because people of future will have different language and because it will be hard to imagine how they were used.

**2.** Lines 2–5 contain parallelism and similes.

**3.** Petrarchan sonnet.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

**1.** Different line lengths, everyday language, natural speech rhythms, and no rhyme pattern.

**2.** Heavy.

**3.** Yes. Manhole covers are heavy.

**4.** Ten.

**5.** Lines 3 and 6.

## CREATIVE WRITING

If some students seem to lack topics, you may want to give the class five minutes for brainstorming ideas, listing them in their journals. The poem or paragraph could be assigned as homework. A few examples of beauty found in the commonplace are rainbow colors of oil in sunlight, a zinnia bed in front of a hamburger stand, a street lamp on a foggy night, the lights of a city seen from a hilltop, colors of people's clothes on a crowded sidewalk, the whistle of an old-fashioned steam locomotive.

## PRESENTATION

You may want to arrange for a student to read this poem aloud. Ask students to notice the shape of the poem as it is read and to consider why Kumin arranged the poem on the page as she did. After the poem is read, they will proba-

bly be able to see that the poem is arranged to portray visually the swimmer's laps, but if not, ask them to compare the appearance of the poem with the photograph of a swimming pool, divided into lanes, on the next page.

Then ask students to find vivid imagery, fig-

ures of speech, and sound devices. Find out if students have competed in swimming meets. If so, ask which sensations of the poem agree with their experiences.

Explain to students that visual poems such as this one are often called "shaped" or "concrete"

# 400-meter Freestyle

**MAXINE KUMIN**

*Poetry is meant to be heard, but poets have experimented with how it looks on the page as well. Modern poets in particular take delight in playing with the shapes of poems, experimenting with strange arrangements of lines and print. A poem may be written so that its shape on the page resembles its subject; there are poems shaped like swans, wineglasses, Christmas trees, and sets of wings. If the appearance of the following poem puzzles you at first, just imagine the movements of a swimmer back and forth across a pool.*

## 400-meter Freestyle

**1**  
Capital letters here and in poem's last line correspond to start and finish of race; they indicate explosion of energy at beginning and "surge" at end.

**2**  
**Metaphor.** Pool's surface is described as "perfect glass"; sound as swimmer "cracks" this glass-like surface is recreated in l. 1.

**3**  
Shape of poem suggests swimmer's laps in a pool.

**4**  
Speaker refers to arm motions of freestyle swimming.

**5**  
For good swimmer, all motion is directed toward moving water back and thus propelling swimmer forward; movements that interfere with forward motion, such as breathing, are minimized.

**6**  
**What does "sea level" mean here?** Surface of the water.

**1** THE GUN full swing the swimmer catapults and cracks

s  
i  
x

**2** feet away onto that perfect glass he catches at

a

**3** n

d

throws behind him scoop after scoop cunningly moving

t

h

e

**4** water back to move him forward. Thrift is his wonderful

s

e

c

ret; he has schooled out all extravagance. No muscle

r

i

p

**5** ples without compensation wrist cock to heel snap to

h

i

s

mobile mouth that siphons in the air that nurtures

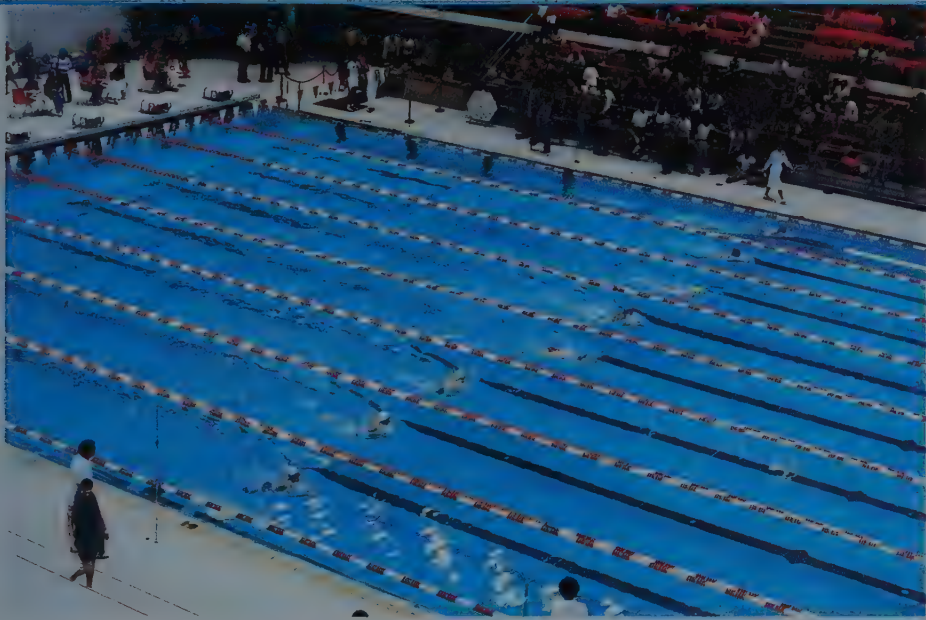
h

i

m

**6** at half an inch above the sea level so to speak.

poems. Ask students if any form other than shaped verse could have described the swimming as well. Conclude with the **Creative Writing** assignment that asks students to write their own shaped verse.



**VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

**Exploring the Subject**

This photograph pictures the swimmer's lanes that are suggested visually in Kumin's poem. Each length of an Olympic-sized pool is 25 meters. Thus, the swimmer would swim 16 lengths to equal 400 meters. By also using 16 lines in her poem, Kumin visually re-creates the freestyle race itself.

7 T  
h  
e  
astonishing whites of the soles of his feet rise  
a  
n  
d  
salute us on the turns. He flips, converts, and is gone  
a  
l  
l  
8 in one. We watch him for signs. His arms are steady at  
t  
h  
e  
catch, his cadent feet tick in the stretch, they know  
t  
h  
e  
9 lesson well. Lungs know, too; he does not list for  
a  
i  
r

7  
**Imagery.** Poet provides visual image of swimmer completing flip turns, executing them in one continuous motion.

8  
"Signs" are of his tiring or of his continuing to do well.

9  
**What does "list" mean in this line?** Leaning to one side too far when getting a breath of air; listing would slow swimmer.



10

**Rhythm.** Successive stressed monosyllables in this line as well as **assonance** of "plum" and "pumps" and "hurt" suggest pounding of swimmer's heart.

11

"Near one more" refers to nearing last length; "final surge" is final spring to finish line.

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Beginning and end of race.  
1b. Arrangement suggests swimmer's movements back and forth and his turns.

2a. Swimmer is thrifty with his effort, getting best possible time out of every motion and breath.  
2b. Perfect efficiency of his muscles from every cock of wrist to snap of heel to quick inhalation just above surface of water.

3a. Alliteration: swing/swimmer, catapults/cracks, mobile/mouth, catch/cadent. Assonance: catapults/cracks/glass/catches, scoop/scoop/moving, plum/pumps. 3b. Responses will vary. Last lines are perhaps most expressive of movements and feelings of swimmer. Note monosyllables "plum red heart pumps hard cries hurt."

#### CREATIVE WRITING

Some students have greater success if they list their words before writing them in desired shape. If a special season or holiday is approaching, you may suggest that students use relevant subjects.

he drives along on little sips carefully expended  
b  
u  
t

10 that plum red heart pumps hard cries hurt how soon

i  
t  
s

11 near one more and makes its final surge TIME: 4:25:9

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. What do the words in capitals at the beginning and end of the poem signify? b. How does the arrangement of the lines imitate the movement of the swimmer in the pool?

2a. What does the poet mean when she says of the swimmer "Thrift is his wonderful secret"?

b. What examples does she give of this "thrift"?

3a. Show how the poet uses alliteration and assonance to make the lines move with force and strenuousness, like the swimmer.

b. What lines do you think vividly capture the movements and feelings of the swimmer?

### Creative Writing

#### Experimenting with Line Arrangements

Write a few lines of your own that form a recognizable shape on the page. Have the lines express some thought or idea, and be sure that the shape you create has something to do with your subject. Imagination is all you need for this kind of expression; you may write some lines in a shape that is as simple as a box or as complicated as a plate of spaghetti.

## PRESENTATION

You may begin with a brief discussion of some of the dangers, including certain animals, of mountain climbing. After reading the poem aloud, focus on the visual arrangement of the lines, which reflects not only the speaker's motions

but also the pattern of climbing a switchback trail. This method of climbing feels very slow because the lower parts of the trail run parallel to higher parts. However, these trails respect the mountain in that they do not cause landslides and erosion.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to define the types of **stanza** structures they have studied—**sonnet**, **free verse**, shaped poetry. Ask them to comment on how a different structure might alter the meaning of a poem.

# The Time We Climbed Snake Mountain

**LESLIE MARMON SILKO**

*How is the subject of this poem conveyed by the arrangement of lines?*

seeing good places  
for my hands  
I grab the warm parts of the cliff  
and I feel the mountain as I climb.

1 somewhere around here

2 yellow spotted snake is sleeping  
on his rock  
in the sun.

so please  
I tell them,  
watch out,  
don't step on yellow spotted snake,  
he lives here.  
3 The mountain is his.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Examine the visual pattern of the poem.  
**a.** How do the lines suggest a winding course up a steep incline? **b.** Why do you suppose an extra space appears between the words *somewhere* and *around* in line 5?
- 2a. What is the speaker's attitude toward the snake? **b.** What attitude toward nature is conveyed in this poem?



## The Time We Climbed Snake Mountain

1

Space between "around" and "somewhere" may represent the speaker's pausing to look for snake.

2

**Imagery.** Poet creates visual image of snake with use of descriptive words and with pattern of ll. 6-8, which suggests curved line of snake's body.

3

The speaker has concern and reverence for snake and nature; final line emphasizes that snake, not humans, belongs on mountain.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** Unevenly broken on page, lines seem to build upon one another, extending farther and farther to right; then, suddenly, they double back on themselves and return to left margin. Pattern creates a winding effect. **1b.** Responses will vary. Space may represent a place where climber has to crawl around a large rock, or climber pauses to look around.

**2a.** Speaker respects snake and states that mountain belongs to it. **2b.** Reverence.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

This photograph portrays mountain climbers finding "good places" for their hands in climbing a cliff. Mountain climbing as a recreational sport began about 1800 in Europe. The first club to promote mountain climbing as an organized sport was formed in London in 1857. People enjoy the challenge and adventure of mountain climbing because it creates a feeling of self-reliance.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Students could select other sonnets and classify them in brief essays as either **Petrarchan** (Italian) or **Shakespearean** (English), using criteria of rhyme scheme and arrangement of ideas.

Some students may want to read other exam-

ples of shaped verse, also known as emblem poetry, *carmen figuratum*, or concrete poetry. Examples are George Herbert's "Easter Wings," Richard Kostelanetz's "A Tribute to Henry Ford," and Robert Hollander's "You Too? Me Too."

Students could write their own shaped verses,

perhaps incorporating them into a painting or drawing. Others might research such poetic structures as rondel, villanelle, sestina, rondeau, virelay, and limerick.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### William Shakespeare

Shakespeare, the son of a glove-maker, left school at thirteen and married Anne Hathaway, eight years his senior, at age eighteen. His introduction to the theater was as an actor. He wrote thirty-seven plays, which include the famous tragedies *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Macbeth*. In addition, he wrote 154 sonnets that reveal the feelings of the great poet—love, joy, sadness, wonder.

### Karl Shapiro

Shapiro's poetry was influenced not only by his upbringing in a southern Jewish home but also by World War II. His war poems, such as "Elegy for a Dead Soldier," are among the best written by an American poet. In his poems of the American scene, he uses wit and close observation.

### Maxine Kumin

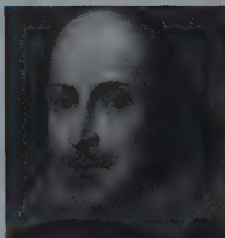
Kumin's poetry has been compared to that of Anne Sexton and Sylvia Plath. Highly emotive but not despairing, it focuses on such subjects as children, nature, farm life, and personal relationships. *Our Ground Time Here Will Be Brief*, her most recent work, explores such themes as family relationships and nature.

### Leslie Marmon Silko

A Native American writer noted for her optimistic tone, Silko portrays religious rituals, histories, and beliefs of her people. Her novel *Ceremony*, her stories, and her poetry emphasize tradition, union with nature, and folklore. Her works are intense and sensitive.

## About the Authors

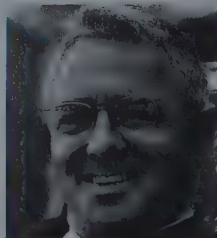
### William Shakespeare (1564–1616)



William Shakespeare is generally considered the greatest writer in the English language. He was born in an English town called Stratford-on-Avon. He left for London sometime in

his early twenties and joined a company of actors. He soon became the company's chief playwright, and by the time he returned to Stratford-on-Avon, he had written thirty-seven plays—a great body of tragedies, comedies, histories, and romances. Ben Jonson, a contemporary and a great dramatist in his own right, said this of Shakespeare: "He was not of an age, but for all time." Jonson's prophecy has turned out to be true, for today Shakespeare's works are read and performed all over the world.

### Karl Shapiro (1913– )



Karl Jay Shapiro was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and attended the University of Virginia. He left school for a time and tried various jobs. He then entered Johns Hopkins University.

When World War II broke out, he was inducted into the Army and sent to the South Pacific. He wrote poetry during his years in the service, and his fiancée had this work published while Shapiro was overseas. His volume *Person, Place, and Thing* (1942) won high praise from critics, and *V-Letter and Other Poems* (1944) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. Shapiro has

also worked as an editor of *Poetry* magazine and *Prairie Schooner*.

### Maxine Kumin (1925– )



Maxine (Winokur) Kumin was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and attended Radcliffe College. She has been an instructor in English at Tufts University and a fellow at the Radcliffe

Institute for Independent Study. In addition to several volumes of poetry, she has written novels and books for children. *No One Writes a Letter to the Snail* is a collection of poems for children. In 1973 she won the Pulitzer Prize for *Up Country: Poems of New England*.

### Leslie Marmon Silko (1942– )



Leslie Marmon Silko was born in Albuquerque and attended the University of New Mexico. She has referred to herself as "a mixed-breed Laguna Pueblo woman." She brings a direct knowl-

edge of Indian lore and tradition to her writing. She has published short stories, poetry, and a novel. She now lives in Tucson, Arizona.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze how **diction**, **imagery**, **figurative language**, sound, and sentence structure contribute to the **tone** of a poem. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** on p. 202 of the *Teacher's Manual* will help students recognize verbals.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Write on the board the titles of several poems that students have read and ask them to identify the **tone** of each. Good choices are "It Bids Pretty Fair," "Eldorado," "Jazz Fantasia," and "Next!"

# TONE

People speak in many tones of voice: angry, thoughtful, joking, tired, and so on. Tone shows the speaker's mood, the emotion behind the words. Poets, too, speak in a variety of tones. The tone of a poem shows its speaker's attitude toward the subject as well as toward the audience. It results from all the different parts of the poem working together. Although there may be shifts of mood within a work, poets generally aim for uniformity of tone.

Diction, or choice of words, affects tone. The words *ladies and gentlemen* convey a tone different from that of *guys and dolls*. If an automotive mechanic says, "Your car could use some repair," the statement indicates a measure of respect for both the car and its owner. Compare the tone of that statement with the tone carried by these words: "Your clunker of a car is falling apart."

Imagery, too, can affect tone. If, for instance, you were describing the food in a cafeteria, the details you select would help convey your attitude. Images such as "the sizzle of frying chicken" and "the aroma of fresh strawberries" convey altogether different feelings from such images as "an overripe tomato slice on a wilted lettuce leaf" and "a cold hot dog on a stale bun."

Even the sounds of the words within a poem help shape its tone. Repetition, as you have seen, can have an emphatic, hypnotic, or haunting emotional effect. Such devices as alliteration, assonance, and onomatopoeia help communicate the poet's attitude toward subject and audience. Rhythm, like words, can affect tone, and so can rhyme or lack of rhyme. A poem with a tightly controlled rhythm and rhyme scheme creates a more formal tone than does a poem that imitates the rhythms of ordinary speech.

Sentence structure, too, can color the tone of a poem. The more complicated the sentence structure, usually the more formal the poem. Parallelism can help determine the tone of a poem as can stanzaic form and organization.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section defines **tone** as "the speaker's attitude toward the subject" and emphasizes that such elements as **diction**, **imagery**, **figurative language**, sound, **rhythm**, and sentence structure contribute to **tone**. Ask students to discuss the tone of some popular songs, television shows, movies, novels, or even comic strips. Are these works designed to amuse, inform, anger, or shock the audience? What do students think is the writer's attitude toward the subject and audience in each work? Have students pay close attention to the **tone** of each of the following poems.

## PRESENTATION

After introducing the literary element **tone**, ask students to read this poem silently. Explain that the poem will not be read orally and discussed in class until they have decided for themselves what its tone is and have answered the study ques-

tions. Remind students to refer to the Glossary and a dictionary to determine the meanings of unfamiliar words.

Allow students an opportunity to read the answers they have written in their notebooks about the poem's tone. In case of differences in

opinion, have students read lines from the poem to support their ideas. After the discussion, you may want to read the poem orally or play Frost's recording of it. Then ask students whether their opinions about the tone of the poem have changed.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Looking out from behind the cage, this monkey seems to have a sad, questioning look. This photograph may lead some students into a discussion of the animal-rights issue of placing animals in zoos. These students might want to write informal essays in which they explore the topic. Essays could be shared with the class.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read these poems, the margin annotations will aid you in emphasizing literary elements that contribute to the **tone** of the following three poems.

### At Woodward's Gardens

**1** Diction. Word *presuming* suggests that, although boy considers his intelligence superior to that of monkeys, it may not be.

**2** *What is the "burning-glass"?* In the context of the poem, what might the glass symbolize? Magnifying glass possibly symbolizes scientific knowledge, technology.

**3** Monkeys cannot understand human speech.

**4** *What does the boy show the monkeys?* He shows them how glass works by focusing it on monkeys' noses and causing discomfort to them with heat it captures from sun; he also shows his cruelty.

**5** Monkeys go to each other for comfort from pain as humans would go to one another.



# At Woodward's Gardens

**ROBERT FROST**

*This poem is like a fable—a short, simple story that illustrates a moral. Woodward's Gardens was a large estate with a zoo in San Francisco.*

- 1** A boy, presuming on his intellect,  
Once showed two little monkeys in a cage
- 2** A burning-glass they could not understand  
And never could be made to understand.
- 3** Words are no good: to say it was a lens  
For gathering solar rays would not have helped.
- 4** But let him show them how the weapon worked.  
He made the sun a pinpoint on the nose  
Of first one, then the other, till it brought  
A look of puzzled dimness to their eyes  
That blinking could not seem to blink away.
- 5** They stood arms laced together at the bars,  
And exchanged troubled glances over life.  
One put a thoughtful hand up to his nose  
As if reminded—or as if perhaps

15

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 46 / Selection Test 37 / Vocabulary Test 19 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 42

6 Within a million years of an idea.  
 He got his purple little knuckles stung.  
 The already known had once more been confirmed  
 By psychological experiment,  
 7 And that were all the finding to announce  
 Had the boy not presumed too close and long.  
 There was a sudden flash of arm, a snatch,  
 And the glass was the monkeys', not the boy's.  
 Precipitately<sup>o</sup> they retired back-cage  
 And instituted an investigation  
 On their part, though without the needed insight.  
 They bit the glass and listened for the flavor.  
 They broke the handle and the binding off it.  
 Then none the wiser, frankly gave it up,  
 And having hid it in their bedding straw  
 Against the day of prisoners' ennui,<sup>o</sup>  
 Came dryly forward to the bars again  
 8 To answer for themselves: Who said it mattered  
 What monkeys did or didn't understand?  
 They might not understand a burning-glass.  
 They might not understand the sun itself.  
 9 It's knowing what to do with things that counts.

20. **were:** This subjunctive form of *be* has the meaning here of "would have been."

24. **Precipitately:** hurriedly.  
 25

30  
 31. **ennui** (än'wē'): boredom.

35

6  
 Frost refers humorously to idea of evolution; perhaps in one million years monkeys will understand.

7  
**Irony.** Boy's intellect may not be as superior as he thought.

8  
**What is suggested by monkeys' actions?** In some ways instinct may be superior to knowledge, especially if knowledge is used cruelly.

9  
**Tone.** Frost's humorously mocking tone is clear here.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. What is the "burning-glass"?
- 2a. What does Frost mean when he says the boy is "presuming on his intellect"? b. How would you describe this attitude in everyday language? c. What tone is conveyed by Frost's elegant phrase?
- 3a. How would you describe the poet's attitude toward the boy's experiment? b. Toward the monkeys?
- 4a. For what different purposes do the boy and the monkeys try to use the burning-glass? b. What comment does the poem make on our use of scientific discoveries?
5. How would you describe the poem's overall tone? Would you characterize it as serious, mocking, comic, ironic? Explain.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Practice in Reading and Writing** section on p. 209.

## Creative Writing

### ► Communicating Tone in a Description

In a brief paragraph describe some animal or thing in such a way that your attitude is clear. Do not say directly what you think of your subject. Let your choice of words convey your attitude.

### ► Writing a Fable

Choose a well-known saying such as "All that glitters is not gold" or "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence" and write a fable that illustrates the wisdom of that saying. You may use animal characters or human characters. If you wish, compose your fable in verse. Accompany the fable with illustrations if you like.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. A pocket-sized magnifying glass with handle.
- 2a. Boy takes for granted his intelligence is superior to that of monkeys. 2b. He thinks he's being smart. 2c. A tone of comic irony.
- 3a. Frost regards the boy's experiment as an impulse to show off and tease monkeys. 3b. Frost regards them with sympathy, realistic understanding of their nature, and amusement when they dispose of burning glass.
- 4a. Boy tries to annoy monkeys with it; they try to find some useful purpose for it such as for food, and then hide it. 4b. What counts is knowing what to do with things—practical knowledge.
5. Mischievous, lightly mocking. Speaker seems to enjoy telling how monkeys outwit boy in "scientific" experiment.



## PRESENTATION

Students will have probably seen graffiti. Ask for a definition of the word and have students tell where they have seen examples. You may want to discuss place names.

Ask students to determine the **tone** of Fear-

ing's art review of graffiti as the poem is read aloud. Students might be surprised to realize that the poet is not preaching against graffiti but looking ironically at this phenomenon of modern life. One of the strongest lines is the **metaphor** "these simple thumbprints on the throat of

time," which means that the graffiti are some artists' methods of attaining immortality.

After students have discussed the poem, have a student with a strong voice read it aloud again.

## Art Review

1

**Diction.** Formal, lofty diction suggests that speaker intends to write a serious review of art, but location of artwork creates satirical **tone**.

2

**Irony.** The "great tradition" is ironic, applying not to serious art but to graffiti sketched on walls.

3

**How does the language in parentheses in stanza 1 differ from that in the rest of the stanza?** In contrast to objective descriptions in rest of stanza, language in parentheses expresses artistic judgments and recommendations.

4

**Metaphor.** Comparison suggests speaker sees graffiti as attempt to conquer time and achieve recognition and immortality.

5

Interesting **epithets** suggest that graffiti artists seek an identity in an impersonal society.

# Art Review

**KENNETH FEARING**

*The art that forms the subject of this poem is graffiti (grə-fē'tē), crude drawings on walls and doors in public places. What different kinds of graffiti does the speaker itemize?*

1 Recently displayed at the Times Square° Station, a new Vandyke° on the face-cream girl.

(Artist unknown. Has promise, but lacks the brilliance shown by the great masters of the Elevated age°)

The latest wood carving in a Whelan° telephone booth, titled "O Mortal Fools WA 9-5090," shows two winged hearts above an ace of spades.

(His meaning is not entirely clear, but this man will go far)

A charcoal nude in the rear of Flatbush° Ahearn's Bar & Grill, "Forward to the Brotherhood of Man," has been

2 boldly conceived in the great tradition.

5

(We need more, much more of this)

Then there is the chalk portrait, on the walls of a waterfront warehouse, of a gentleman wearing a derby hat:

"Bleecker Street° Mike is a double-crossing rat."

3 (Morbidity, but powerful. Don't miss)

Know then by these presents, know all men by these signs

4 and omens, by these simple thumbprints on the throat of time,

10

Know that Pete, the people's artist, is ever watchful,

That Tuxedo Jim has passed among us, and was much displeased, as always,

That George the Ghost (no man has ever seen him) and Billy the Bicep boy will neither bend nor break,

That Mr. Harkness of Sunnyside still hopes for the best, and

5 has not lost his human touch,

That Phantom Phil, the master of them all, has come and

gone, but will return, and all is well.

1. **Times Square:** a colorful section of Manhattan in New York City. **Vandyke:** a pointed beard named after the Flemish painter Vandyke. 2. **Elevated age:** of elevated trains. 3. **Whelan:** the name of a chain of drugstores. 5. **Flatbush:** a community in Brooklyn, New York. 7. **Bleecker Street:** a street in downtown Manhattan.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the **Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 47 / Selection Test 37 / Vocabulary Test 20 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 42**



## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Part of the mock-serious tone of this poem comes from treating the subject of graffiti in elegant language. For instance, the beard scribbled on the “face-cream girl” is described as being “recently displayed,” as if it were a work of art. The person who drew it is described as an unknown artist, as if the work were listed in a museum guide. What other examples can

you find of ordinary subjects described in lofty language?

2. This poem, like a play, has a cast of characters. The characters’ names help describe them and also define the poet’s attitude toward them. What tone do the names create?

3a. Do you think the poet is more critical of the artists or of the world they portray in their art? Explain. b. How does the title help convey the poem’s tone?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The 1970s and 1980s saw the rise of graffiti artists who often “sprayed” their creations on subway and ghetto walls partly in defiance of the law and partly, they felt, to enhance public property. Walls and boxcars display both ugly scribbling and pop masterpieces. A few graffiti artists have tried to make the transition into serious art, but the vibrancy that graffiti contain in their natural environment seems to disappear in the studio.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Other examples are in l. 2, “lacks the brilliance shown by the great masters”; l. 3, “latest wood carving”; l. 4, “His meaning is not entirely clear”; l. 5, “boldly conceived in the great tradition”; l. 8, “Morbid, but powerful.”  
2. Names make people sound individualistic and quite human, colorful, touching. Poet’s tone is satirical.

3a. Responses will vary. Graffiti appear in public places, some of them squalid, and are perhaps a commentary on commercialism or anonymity of urban life. Artists seem to crave notice from indifferent or hostile world. 3b. Tone is that of social satire, not censure of those who have left their “simple thumbprints on the throat of time.” Title “Art Review” for review of graffiti is ironic.

## PRESENTATION

Read this brief poem aloud to your students to help them grasp its **tone** and **rhythm**. Use the **Vocabulary Activity** on p. 202 of the *Teacher's Manual* to show how the *-ing* words in the poem contribute to both. Students will need a clear

definition of the word *bribe* as it is used in the poem. Mora uses it to mean "an offering to accompany a prayer." Point out that the word comes from an old French word meaning "a morsel of bread given to beggars," but today it has a negative **connotation**.

## CLOSURE

Have students list words that describe the **tone** of each of the three poems they have just read. Then briefly review in class what elements contribute to the tone of each of these poems.

## Bribe

1

*What is the connotation of "bribing" here?* It is positive rather than negative, meaning "to make offering or sacrifice."

2

**Personification.** Earth is personified as "Mother," from whom Indian women request guidance.

3

Implied comparison to spiders' weaving web recalls Indian myths of Spider Grandmother, who was connected with earth and fertility.

4

**Alliteration.** Repetition of *s* sound re-creates scratching sound.

5

Like Indian women, speaker offers bribe to Land; their offerings suit their trade—weaving—as speaker's do her trade—writing.

6

As women weave pictures of natural objects, speaker wants to write of nature.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. To mean an offering that accompanies a prayer for Earth Mother's help. Bribe is intended as part of exchange, not inducement to do wrong. **1b.** Turquoise threads. **1c.** That Earth Mother help them weave beautiful designs. **2a.** Ballpoint pen and paper. **2b.** Help in translating beauty of natural world into words.

# Bribe

PAT MORA

*The word bribe usually has negative connotations. How does the poet use the word here?*

- I hear Indian women  
chanting, chanting
- 1 I see them long ago bribing  
the desert with turquoise threads.  
in the silent morning coolness,  
kneeling, digging, burying  
their offering in the Land  
chanting, chanting
- 2 Guide my hands, Mother,  
to weave singing birds
- 3 flowers rocking in the wind, to trap  
them on my cloth with a web of thin threads.
- 4 Secretly I scratch a hole in the desert  
5 by my home. I bury a ballpoint pen  
and lined yellowing paper. Like the Indians  
I ask the Land to smile on me, to croon
- 6 softly, to help me catch her music with words.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. A *bribe* is a gift used to influence or persuade someone to do something wrong.  
**a.** How is the poet using the word? **b.** What "bribe" do the Indian women offer the land?  
**c.** What do they ask in return?
- 2a.** What is the speaker's offering? **b.** What does she ask in return for her bribe?

## Writing About Literature

### Analyzing tone

Choose one of the poems in this unit and analyze its tone. Show how the poet's use of different elements helps create the tone.

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may wish to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate how two poems with similar subjects can differ in **tone** and purpose. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to brainstorm about the subject of war. List on the board both the positive and negative comments. After students have read the next two poems, have them describe the poets' different attitudes toward war.

## PRESENTATION

In the headnote, students are told that during the Crimean War, the English Light Brigade was ordered by mistake to attack well-fortified Russian gun positions. Armed only with swords, this brigade lost many men unnecessarily. (*Light*

# Poems for Comparison

## The Charge of the Light Brigade

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

*The charge described in the following poem took place in 1854, during the Crimean War, at Balaklava (băl'ə-klä'və) on the Black Sea. The English Light Brigade, armed only with swords, was ordered by mistake to attack well-fortified Russian gun positions.*

Half a league,<sup>o</sup> half a league,  
Half a league onward,

1. **league** (lēg): about three miles or less than five kilometers.

1 All in the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

"Forward the Light Brigade!  
Charge for the guns!" he said.

5

Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"

2 Was there a man dismayed?

10

Not though the soldier knew  
Someone had blundered.

3 Theirs not to make reply,

Theirs not to reason why,

Theirs but to do and die,

15

Into the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

4 Cannon to right of them,

Cannon to left of them,

Cannon in front of them

20

Volleyed and thundered;

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnotes for the following two poems give facts about the Light Brigade charge and about the Battle of Blenheim. Before students read the poems, you may want to present more historical information about the battles (see *Visual Connections*, pp. 368 and 370) or select students to present oral reports about them. Tell students that as they read these two poems, they should think about how the subject (war) and **tones** of the two poems can be compared.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have completed their reading, the margin annotations will aid you in examining the **tone** and purpose of the following poems.

## The Charge of the Light Brigade

1

**Imagery.** Description indicates hopelessness of Light Brigade's charge against guns.

2

*How do soldiers react to mistaken order? Why do they act in this manner?* They obey without question or dismay. They feel their duty is to obey commands, even if they disagree with tactic.

3

Lines 13–15 indicate soldiers' duty to a command.

4

**Parallelism.** Repetition of subject and use of similar prepositional phrases in ll. 18–20 suggest rhythmic marching of troops.

refers to the fact that they carried light arms—swords—rather than heavy weapons.)

You might ask students to speculate on how the English felt after losing so many men for no reason. Then have them explain Tennyson's attitude toward this charge after they have read his

poem silently. Ask if they were surprised not to find emotions of anger and bitterness toward the event in the poem. Explain that Tennyson was very interested in events and social issues of his time and that as poet laureate of England, he wrote poems to celebrate public occasions.

Reread the poem orally and point out to students that the **rhyme** and the **rhythm** of the poem powerfully convey the military actions of the soldiers and the sounds of battle. Have students keep notes about the poem in their journals for a future writing assignment.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The charge of the Light Brigade occurred in the Battle of Balaklava in the Crimean War. The battle was fought October 25, 1854, near the town of Balaklava in Crimea, a peninsula in southwest Russia, which extends into the Black Sea. The Turkish, French, and English were on one side and the Russians on the other. Lord Cardigan's English cavalry brigade, armed with only swords, was commanded by mistake to charge down a long valley and attack the Russians, who were armed with guns. The Crimean War was fought to stop Russia's attempt to gain an outlet to the Mediterranean Sea through Turkey.



*Scotland Forever (Charge of the Light Brigade)* by Butler.

City Art Gallery, Leeds

5

Emphasizes that men ride courageously, without hesitation or question.

6

**Imagery.** Metaphorical description of horrible fate of courageous soldiers.

7

**Onomatopoeia.** "Shattered and sundered" suggests clashing of swords in battle.

8

Brigade is forced to retreat and its numbers are reduced, hence "Not the six hundred."

Stormed at with shot and shell,

5 Boldly they rode and well,

6 Into the jaws of Death,

Into the mouth of hell

25

Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabers bare,

Flashed as they turned in air

Sab'ring the gunners there,

Charging an army, while

30

All the world wondered.

Plunged in the battery<sup>32</sup> smoke

Right through the line they broke;

Cossack<sup>34</sup> and Russian

Reeled from the saber-stroke

7 Shattered and sundered.<sup>36</sup>

8 Then they rode back, but not,

Not the six hundred.

32. **battery:** heavy guns.

34. **Cossack** (kōs'āk): The Cossacks, from southern Russia, were noted as cavalrymen.

36. **sundered** (sūn'dərd): divided.

Cannon to right of them,  
 Cannon to left of them, 40  
 Cannon behind them  
 9 Volleyed and thundered;  
 Stormed at with shot and shell,  
 While horse and hero fell,  
 They that had fought so well 45  
 Came through the jaws of Death,  
 Back from the mouth of hell,  
 All that was left of them,  
 Left of six hundred.

10 When can their glory fade? 50  
 O the wild charge they made!  
 11 All the world wondered.  
 12 Honor the charge they made!  
 Honor the Light Brigade,  
 Noble six hundred! 55

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. Why did the men follow the command to “Charge for the guns”? b. Which lines comment on a soldier’s duty in the face of a command?

2. In lines 31 and 52 Tennyson says “All the world wondered.” Does he mean that the world marvelled at the bravery of the men, or that the world wondered about the mistake that caused the men to be slaughtered? Explain your answer.

3. Why does Tennyson believe the memory of these men should be honored?

4. Which phrases and lines create the feeling of battle?

5. Some readers think that the repetitions of rhymes suggest the mechanical actions of the soldiers as they respond to the commands. Do you agree, or do you think the repetition serves another purpose in the poem?

6. How would you describe the poet’s attitude toward the events described in this poem?

9

**Onomatopoeia.** “Volleyed and thundered” suggests rhythm and sound of the firing of cannons.

10

To honor heroic soldiers, Tennyson emphasizes glory of war rather than its waste.

11

Actually, the English public was outraged by the unnecessary deaths.

12

**Tone.** Tennyson focuses on soldiers who fight heroically and deserve honor.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Their duty was to fight, not express opinion or question command. 1b. Lines 13–15.

2. Responses will vary. English public was outraged by needless deaths.

3. Men fought bravely in battle they had no hope of winning.

4. Answers may include ll. 5–6, 9–10, 20–22, 27–30, 32–33, 35–36, and 41–44.

5. Responses will vary. Repetition could emphasize sense of battle, inevitability of death and defeat, or bravery of Light Brigade.

6. Responses will vary. Tennyson believed that certain wars must be fought, despite great sacrifice; admits this battle was mistake but states soldier’s duty is to obey.



## PRESENTATION

Tell the class that this poem is about another famous battle. In this poem, an old farmer tells his two small grandchildren about the historic Battle of Blenheim. Suggest that students pay close attention to the poet's **tone** as they read

the poem silently.

Point out that, just as Tennyson's poem is a form of political propaganda, this poem, too, makes its own strong statement about war. Ask students what this statement is. Do they agree or disagree with Southey's view? Is this view more,

less, or equally applicable today?

Students might have difficulty understanding the relationship of the characters in Southey's poem to the participants in the battle. Explaining that they are descendants of the victors—the Austrians, aided by their English allies—should

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

One of the turning points in the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714), the Battle of Blenheim was fought on August 13, 1704, between the English and Austrians on one side and the French and Bavarians on the other. The English gave the battle its name from the name of the nearby Bavarian village of Blindheim. You may wish to point out on a map of Europe where the battle took place.

### Ideas for Writing

You could have students write brief essays comparing and contrasting the views of the Battle of Blenheim as shown in this engraving and in the poem. The engraving shows the battle in progress. Although it shows carnage and suffering, it also shows men performing great feats. It does not show civilian suffering. The poem views the battle long after it has finished and from a civilian point of view. Specific feats have been forgotten, but the memory of the suffering remains.



Eighteenth-century engraving of the Battle of Blenheim.

# The Battle of Blenheim

**ROBERT SOUTHEY**

*In 1704, during the War of the Spanish Succession, the English-Austrian army won a decisive victory over the French and their allies at Blenheim (blēn'əm), a village in Germany.*

## The Battle of Blenheim

1

**Setting.** Peaceful setting contrasts with following description of carnage of war.

2

**What has Peterkin found?** In next stanza, we discover he has found a human skull.

1 It was a summer evening;

Old Kaspar's work was done,

And he before his cottage door

Was sitting in the sun,

And by him sported on the green

His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

5

2 She saw her brother Peterkin

Roll something large and round,

Which he beside the rivulet

In playing there had found;

He came to ask what he had found,

That was so large, and smooth, and round.

10

help students understand Southey's use of irony.

Inform students they will be writing a comparison of the poems by Tennyson and Southey. Have them review their journal notes. You may also want the class to brainstorm, generating a

list of details about each poem.

Comparison of the writings of Tennyson and Southey will give students an opportunity to show how an author's style can reflect his or her attitude toward a particular subject.

- Old Kaspar took it from the boy,  
Who stood expectant by;  
And then the old man shook his head,  
3 And with a natural sigh,  
" 'Tis some poor fellow's skull," said he,  
"Who fell in the great victory.  
15  
"I find them in the garden,  
For there's many here about;  
20 And often, when I go to plow,  
The plowshare turns them out!  
For many thousand men," said he,  
"Were slain in that great victory."  
4 "Now tell us what 'twas all about,"  
Young Peterkin, he cries;  
And little Wilhelmine looks up  
With wonder-waiting eyes;  
"Now tell us all about the war,  
And what they fought each other for."  
30  
"It was the English," Kaspar cried,  
"Who put the French to rout;  
5 But what they fought each other for,  
I could not well make out;  
But everybody said," quoth he,  
"That 'twas a famous victory."  
35  
6 "My father lived at Blenheim then,  
Yon little stream hard by;  
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,  
And he was forced to fly;  
40 So with his wife and child he fled,  
Nor had he where<sup>o</sup> to rest his head.  
"With fire and sword the country round  
Was wasted far and wide,  
And many a childing<sup>o</sup> mother then  
And newborn baby died;  
45  
7 But things like that, you know, must be  
At every famous victory.

3  
*What may Kaspar's "natural sigh" indicate?* Beneath his matter-of-fact description and apparent blind acceptance may lie a dislike of warfare.

4  
Children's eagerness to hear will turn into puzzlement and sorrow before Kaspar finishes his tale.

5  
*Irony.* It was "famous victory," but now no one remembers what it was about.

6  
Kaspar also relates suffering of civilian; "child" in l. 41 is probably young Kaspar himself.

7  
*Irony.* By now, "great victory" and "famous victory" are bitterly ironic because of suffering and death battle caused.

38. **Yon . . . hard by:** near yonder little stream. 42. **where:** a place in which. 45. **childing:** with child.

## CLOSURE

Have students summarize the contrasting attitudes toward war expressed by Tennyson and Southey. Then ask them which author presents his point of view more effectively.

8

**Imagery.** Gruesome details underscore horror of war.

9

Wilhelmine's reaction is spontaneous and honest; in her innocence, she sees killing for what it is, not as means to further national goals or to achieve military glory.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. He remembers, or has been told, that there was a "great victory" in which thousands died; that his father had to flee after his house was burned; remembers deaths of women and children, wasted countryside, and thousands of rotting bodies; that Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene were praised. **1b.** Responses will vary. He may not have understood reason because he was a child. Perhaps only participants knew, or perhaps there was not a good reason.

2. If it were truly a "great victory," Kaspar would know why it had been fought.

3a. The old man is resigned to hardships and death war caused; Peterkin is curious, wants to know why war was fought and what happened afterward; Wilhelmine thinks battle "wicked."

3b. Peterkin's curiosity points up old man's blind acceptance; Wilhelmine's horror contrasts with his matter-of-fact attitude.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Answers to **For Study and Discussion** questions provide students with some information needed to complete the assignment. Note that "point of view" here refers to the writer's attitude or tone.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Students could write essays in which they describe the tone of "To Satch," "The Meadow Mouse," or "The Shell," as it is revealed in the poem's diction, imagery, figurative language, and sound devices.

Students might create visual representations of the tone of one of the poems they have read. For example, they might create a battle scene that represents the tone of Southey's poem.

Students interested in history might use encyclopedias or history books to investigate the

"They say it was a shocking sight  
After the field was won;

50

8 For many thousand bodies here  
Lay rotting in the sun;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlbro<sup>o</sup> won,  
And our good Prince Eugene."<sup>o</sup>

55

9 "Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!"  
Said little Wilhelmine.

"Nay . . . nay . . . my little girl," quoth he,  
"It was a famous victory.

60

"And everybody praised the Duke  
Who this great fight did win."

"But what good came of it at last?"  
Quoth little Peterkin.

"Why, that I cannot tell," said he,  
"But 'twas a famous victory."

65

55. **Duke of Marlbro<sup>o</sup>:** Marlborough was in command of the English forces.

56. **Prince Eugene:** He was in command of the Austrian forces.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Old Kaspar cannot remember the reasons why the war was fought. **a.** What does he remember? **b.** Why do you think he cannot remember "what they fought each other for"?

2. The phrases "great victory" and "famous victory" recur throughout the poem as a refrain. How do you know that these repetitions are ironic?

3a. State the attitude of each character toward the battle. **b.** What contrast is intended between the attitude of the old man and that of the grandchildren?

## Writing About Literature

### Comparing Poems

"The Charge of the Light Brigade" and "The Battle of Blenheim" deal differently with the subject of war. Compare the points of view, referring to specific lines in the poems.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.



historical situations surrounding the battles discussed in the poems by Tennyson and Southey. Alternatively, they might investigate the public reactions to Tennyson's poem in Victorian England. Dismayed when accused of being a lover of war, Tennyson wrote the poem "Epilogue" in

response. Some students might want to read this poem, which is a dialogue between Irene, goddess of peace, and the poet, who offers a justification of war.

You may also wish to have students take notes on specific details of the Battle of Blenheim and

retell it from another point of view, perhaps that of Prince Eugene.

## About the Authors

### Kenneth Fearing (1902–1961)



Kenneth Fearing was born in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. After attending the University of Wisconsin, he worked at various jobs before turning to writing as a career. Much of

Fearing's poetry is about life in the modern American city.

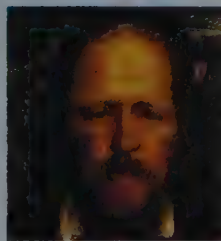
### Pat Mora (1942– )



Pat Mora is a Chicano poet whose work has been published in a number of periodicals. Her poems often contain expressions and dialogue in Spanish. "Bribe" appears in

*Chants*, a collection of poems about the desert around El Paso, where she lives.

### Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892)



Tennyson wrote an epic poem at the age of twelve, a blank verse drama at fourteen, and he published a book of poetry while he was still in his early twenties. He became

one of England's most popular poets and for over forty years was poet laureate. He was made Lord Tennyson in honor of his achievements as a poet. His masterpiece, *In Memoriam*, was written after the death of his best friend. Among his best-known poems are the *Idylls of the King*, about the legend of King Arthur and the Round Table.

### Robert Southey (1774–1843)



Like Tennyson, Southey (sou'thē, sūth'ē) was poet laureate of England. Early in his career he traveled to Spain and Portugal, gathering material on the history and legends of these countries.

He used this material to write a number of narrative poems. "The Cataract of Lodore" is one of the best onomatopoeic poems in our language.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### Kenneth Fearing

After graduating from college in 1924, poet and novelist Kenneth Fearing lived in New York City's Greenwich Village. In 1936 he was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for creative writing. His style includes street jargon, short staccato lines, and internal rhyme. His poems focus on city settings, the disintegration of middle-class life, and revolutionary ideas.

### Pat Mora

Mora is the author of two award-winning books of poetry, *Chants* and *Borders*. Her poetry is influenced by the Southwest—El Paso and the Juarez border area. Other poems reflect her views on women's issues. She is currently completing research on minority writers for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

### Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Born at Somersby in Lincolnshire, Tennyson responded to the bitter temperament of his father with an almost lifelong melancholia and depression. Educated at Cambridge, Tennyson wrote an extensive body of poetry that has remained popular. Influenced by Milton and Keats, Tennyson showed characteristics of the Romantic tradition in his beginning works. His later work is that of a Victorian poet interested in the themes of his day—progress, English freedom, moral idealism.

### Robert Southey

Southey supported himself and his family by writing extensive histories and essays. He was recommended for poet laureateship in 1813 by Sir Walter Scott after Scott declined. Southey was a serious student of folklore and wrote the classic children's story, "The Three Bears."

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify the emotional **tone** and sound devices in **lyric poetry**. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** on p. 211 of the *Teacher's Manual* gives students practice in analyzing word choice.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Tell students that they already have read many lyric poems in this unit. After defining the term, refer students to the Table of Contents, and ask them to list several of these poems.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section briefly identifies the three major types of poetry—*lyric*, *narrative*, and *dramatic*. **Lyric poetry** conveys the speaker's emotional response to a person, place, object, or idea. Have students determine the speaker's emotions as they read each lyric poem in this section.

# Types of Poetry

The following section covers three major types of poetry: *lyric*, *narrative*, and *dramatic*. Although these categories frequently overlap (a narrative poem may also be dramatic, for instance), each type has distinctive characteristics. Lyric poems are generally short poems that express an intense emotional response of the speaker to some person, place, object, or idea. Narrative poems tell a story. Dramatic poems present characters who speak to other characters or to an implied audience.

## LYRIC POETRY

In ancient Greece, lyrics were sung to the music of a lyre, a sort of harp. We still call the words of a song its lyrics. Lyric poems are rich in musical devices. There are many different kinds of lyric poems, including sonnets, hymns, songs, odes, and elegies.

## PRESENTATION

The **dialect** of this poem is both an attraction and an obstacle. Before reading the poem, preview Burns's use of the Scottish **dialect** by focusing on sentence patterns, vocabulary, and pronunciation. You may want to read the poem

aloud or play a recording to emphasize this regional speech pattern. You might also have students practice the dialect by having them read the poem aloud in groups.

Point out that Burns fashioned this and other fine lyrics from unpromising material. From the

old Scottish song "John Anderson My Jo," which is about an old woman's bad-tempered reproach of her husband, Burns created this clear, simple lyric by using **rhyme**, **alliteration**, and **repetition**.

# John Anderson My Jo

**ROBERT BURNS**

*Robert Burns wrote many love songs in Scottish dialect. As you read this poem, note its beauty of sound.*

John Anderson my jo,<sup>o</sup> John,  
When we were first acquaint,<sup>o</sup>

1 Your locks were like the raven,  
Your bonny brow was brent,<sup>o</sup>

2 But now your brow is beld,<sup>o</sup> John,  
Your locks are like the snow;  
But blessings on your frosty pow,<sup>o</sup>  
John Anderson my jo.

John Anderson my jo, John,

3 We clamb the hill thegither;  
And mony a canty<sup>o</sup> day, John,  
We've had wi' ane anither:

Now we maun<sup>o</sup> totter down, John,  
And hand in hand we'll go,  
And sleep thegither at the foot,  
John Anderson my jo.

1. **jo**: joy, sweetheart.

2. **acquaint**: acquainted.

4. **brent**: unwrinkled.

5 5. **beld**: bald.

7. **pow** (pō, pou): head.

11. **canty**: happy.

13. **maun**: must.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. Who is the speaker in this poem?  
b. How have she and her sweetheart changed?  
c. What does the speaker recall about their days together?

2a. What symbolic meaning is suggested by the phrases "clamb the hill" and "totter down"?  
b. What do you think is the meaning of line 15?

3. Read the poem aloud, paying attention to the words in Scottish dialect. How do the rhyme, alliteration, and repetition of words and phrases contribute to the music of the poem?

4. Although this poem is written in Scottish dialect, it is one of the best-known love poems in our language. a. What do you think is the source of its wide appeal? b. Why would it appeal to both young and old readers?

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read these poems, the margin annotations will aid discussion of musical and emotional qualities of lyric poetry.

### John Anderson My Jo

1

Speaker recalls John Anderson's youth, when his hair was "raven," or black, and forehead unwrinkled.

2

**What does John look like now?** He is old, brow (forehead) is "beld" (bald), and "locks" (hair) are white.

3

**Metaphor.** "Hill" is metaphor for life in ll. 10–15; going down hill is growing old, and "sleep thegither" at foot of hill refers to being buried together.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Speaker is John Anderson's wife. 1b. They have grown old. 1c. They had many happy days together.

2a. "Clamb the hill" symbolizes life. "Totter down" suggests growing old. 2b. Husband and wife are together in death.

3. Sequence of single sounds contributes to melodious rhythm of poem.

4a. Responses will vary. It is a beautiful, simple love poem.

4b. Responses will vary. It presents view of love that brings youth and old age together.



## PRESENTATION

"O Mistress Mine" is a love song sung by the clown Feste in *Twelfth Night*. You may wish to retell the story of this delightful Shakespearean comedy; Barron's *Highlights of Shakespeare's Plays* includes a summary and additional songs

from the play.

Be sure that students understand the **connotations** as well as the **denotations** of words such as *mistress* and *sweetening*. After students have read the lyric and interpreted it with the help of the study questions, they should discover

its lighthearted **tone** and roguish message. A recording or live performance of the song will enhance enjoyment and understanding.

# O Mistress Mine

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

## O Mistress Mine

1

Speaker tells his lady that she may cease searching for love, for he is her true love.

2

**Diction.** *Trip* means "to walk daintily"; *sweetening* means "sweet one or darling."

3

**Theme.** Second stanza introduces *carpe diem* theme, which means "seize the day." Future is uncertain, delay does not bring abundance, and youth will disappear. Thus, enjoy love now before it is too late.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Lines 7–12.
2. Response to love should be immediate, not delayed. Since future is uncertain, there is no advantage in waiting.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

This assignment is ideal for small groups. One half of the group can analyze and write about the tone of "John Anderson My Jo" while the other half of the group does the same for "O Mistress Mine." The group members should then compare their analyses and work together to produce the final paper. Such group activities are important because they allow students to discuss works of literature and their own writing with their peers.

*This is a love song sung by the clown, Feste, in Twelfth Night. The title mistress was a courteous way to address a lady, and it was also a word for "sweet-heart."*

1 O mistress mine, where are you roaming?

O, stay and hear, your true-love's coming,  
That can sing both high and low.

2 Trip no further, pretty sweetening;

Journeys end in lovers meeting,  
Every wise man's son doth know.

5

3 What is love? 'Tis not hereafter;

Present mirth hath present laughter;

What's to come is still unsure:

In delay there lies no plenty;

Then come and kiss me, sweet and twenty,

Youth's a stuff will not endure.

10

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. In this poem the speaker pleads with his beloved to return his love quickly, since the time of youth is short. Which lines express this idea?
2. What is the argument of lines 7–10?

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Comparing Tone

Compare the tones of "John Anderson My Jo" and "O Mistress Mine." What attitude toward love is expressed in each poem?

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the **Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 49 / Selection Test 38 / Vocabulary Test 20 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 43**

## PRESENTATION

If possible, bring pictures or slides of the Lake District and Dove Cottage where Wordsworth lived and wrote. Students are usually interested in knowing about the poet, his sister Dorothy, his wife Mary, and his friend Coleridge.

Whether studying this poem in a small group or in class, students will have little difficulty with its **imagery**. A good oral reading is essential for bringing out the music of the lyric. The study questions will aid students in their analysis of the poem.

Students should test themselves to see if their "inward eye" can recall anything as memorable as the "host of golden daffodils." In preparation for the writing exercise on p. 378, students might write both journal entries and poems about a memory of their own.

# I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

1 I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales<sup>2</sup> and hills,  
2 When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils,  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

2. vales: valleys.

5

3 Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle on the Milky Way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay:<sup>10</sup>  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
4 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

10 10. margin of a bay: edge of the water.



## I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

1

**Simile.** Comparison of speaker to cloud implies that he is not only alone but aloof and separate.

2

**Imagery.** Lines 3–6 provide a visual image of yellow daffodils blowing in the breeze; the onomatopoeic "fluttering" suggests the sound of the daffodils in the breeze.

3

*To what are the daffodils compared in ll. 7–8? What is implied by this simile? Stars in the Milky Way. The perpetual beauty of daffodils is suggested.*

4

*How are the daffodils personified in l. 12? They have "heads" and they "dance."*

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The aerial viewpoint in this photograph of a field of yellow daffodils recalls the viewpoint of the speaker in "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud." Wordsworth saw grandeur, beauty, permanence, and order in nature. He believed that through observation of nature the poet could attain a mystical understanding of the universe.

5

In a coordinated movement representing order in nature, the waves enter into flowers' dance; the movement of the waves and that of flowers in the wind would be similar.

6

**Personification.** Speaker shares in the joy he attributes to flowers when he first sees them and, as shown in last stanza, later in memory.

7

This line and last stanza emphasize "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" and "emotion recollected in tranquillity" that are essence of poetry as Wordsworth defines it.

8

**Alliteration.** Repetition of *d* sound and **rhythm** suggest daffodils dancing in wind.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Felt lonely. 1b. Seeing daffodils made him feel happy.

2a. No. 2b. Remembers them with pleasure. 2c. The memory or imagination of what has been seen. Recollections can be "the bliss of solitude."

3a. Lines 1–2, 7–8 (similes); lines 3–4, 6, 12, 13–14, 16 (personification). 3b. Responses will vary. Lines 1–2, 23–24.

4a. Lines 11, 19. 4b. Inversion in l. 19 enables poet to rhyme *lie* and *eye*.

### EXTENDING YOUR STUDY

Students will probably note a great deal of agreement in detail. To create a poem, Wordsworth depicts speaker as being alone and adds description of effect this scene has as a memory.

5 The waves beside them danced; but they

Outdid the sparkling waves in glee;

A poet could not but be gay,

6 In such a jocund<sup>o</sup> company;

7 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought

What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie

In vacant or in pensive mood,

They flash upon that inward eye

Which is the bliss of solitude;

And then my heart with pleasure fills,

8 And dances with the daffodils.

15

16. **jocund:** merry.

20

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. What was the poet's mood before he encountered the great wild garden of flowers?

b. How did his discovery change his mood?

2a. Did the poet realize, at the time he saw the flowers, how important the sight would become to him? b. How do the flowers continue to be a thing of beauty even when he can no longer see them? c. What is the "inward eye" Wordsworth refers to in line 21?

3a. Which lines in the poem contain similes and personifications? b. Which lines strike you as particularly melodious?

4. Notice the very regular rhyme scheme. a. Where in the poem does the poet use inversion? b. How does inverted word order enable him to keep a tight rhyme scheme?

## Extending Your Study

### Comparing a Poem with a Prose Description

Wordsworth's sister, Dorothy, kept a journal in which she recorded observations made during walks with her brother. Here is an entry for April 15, 1802, in which she tells of seeing daffodils. Compare Wordsworth's poem with this prose description. How much agreement is there in details? What has Wordsworth added in order to create a poem out of this experience?

When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more and at last under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and about them, some rested their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness and the rest tossed and reeled and danced and seemed as if they verily laughed. . . .

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 50 / Selection Test 38 / Vocabulary Test 20 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 43



## PRESENTATION

Students should thoughtfully consider and interpret the poem's last line, especially the literal and figurative meanings of *snow*.

Be sure the poem has a sensitive oral reading. The flawless music gentles the sadness of the

theme of life's brevity. Use the study questions to help students discover this theme and to see that the poem reflects Housman's belief that natural beauty is only a brief interruption of the tragedy of life. Although you need not burden students with Housman's pessimism, you may

want to explain that he does not share Wordsworth's faith in the goodness of nature, even when he looks at the "loveliest of trees."

# Loveliest of Trees

A. E. HOUSMAN

- 1 Loveliest of trees, the cherry now  
Is hung with bloom along the bough,  
And stands about the woodland ride<sup>o</sup>  
Wearing white for Eastertide.
- 2 Now, of my threescore years and ten,<sup>o</sup> 5  
Twenty will not come again,  
And take from seventy springs a score,  
It only leaves me fifty more.
- And since to look at things in bloom 10  
Fifty springs are little room,  
About the woodlands I will go
- 3 To see the cherry hung with snow.

3. **woodland ride**: a forest path, usually for riding horses.  
5. **threescore years and ten**: seventy years, a Biblical allusion to the average human life span. See Psalm 90:10.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

- 1a. How old does the speaker say he is in stanza 2? b. What do lines 7–8 mean?
- 2a. What does the speaker mean by saying "Fifty springs are little room"? b. Why does he go to see the trees?
3. Both this poem and "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (page 377) express delight in nature.  
a. How are the speakers' attitudes toward nature similar? b. Are their attitudes different in any way? If so, how?

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 50 / Selection Test 38



## Loveliest of Trees

1

**Imagery.** Poet begins in ll. 1–2 with positive image of blossoms, suggesting life, springtime, and youth.

2

**How old is the speaker?** Twenty years old.

3

**Imagery.** The word *snow* suggests not only white blossoms but also actual snow. Together, both interpretations suggest year's cycle.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Twenty years old. 1b. He expects to see fifty more springs.  
2a. Fifty springs are not really much time. 2b. Trees in bloom are lovely. He knows how little time there is to enjoy world.  
3a. Both see beauty in nature and enjoy it in solitude.  
3b. Wordsworth believes recollections of beauty are the "bliss of solitude." Housman thinks how soon life and beauty slip away.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The fragile cherry blossoms on the tree pictured here will not last long, but each spring will be graced by their beauty. In feudal Japan, after Zen Buddhism became common among the noble and Samurai classes, viewing cherry blossoms was a popular spring ritual. The wealthy organized viewing excursions, and they even built bridges, verandas, and pavilions for cherry-blossom viewing. This tradition continues today.

## PRESENTATION

Students might discuss and analyze this poem in small groups. Provide them with a list of questions to guide their analysis, or remind them to consider major elements of poetry (such as speaker, diction, imagery, figurative lan-

guage).

Be sure that the poem is read aloud at least twice in class. Students will probably agree that the poem depicts a **mood** of loneliness and depression. Ask them to comment on how the sounds in the poem contribute to this mood. Use

the study questions to evoke further discussion of the poem's **mood**, **imagery**, and **theme**. You might request that students read "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" and then compare and contrast these two lyrics, focusing on the different moods.

### Desert Places

1

**Imagery.** Snow covers all but dead weeds and stubble, creating desert place or wasteland; **alliteration** of *f* and *s* suggests sound of falling snow.

2

Speaker's depression ("absent-spirited" state) mirrors external landscape.

3

Speaker, like snow, is empty, blank.

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Mood of loneliness and desolation. 1b. Falling snow and falling night, a few weeds and stubble showing above the snow, lonely woods, and absence of wildlife.

2. The speaker is too "absent-spirited" (depressed and lost in his own thoughts) to add life to the scene; therefore he becomes part of the loneliness.

3a. Scene will be more desolate; field deep in snow under dark night will appear lifeless. 3b. He will become even more lonely.

4a. Responses will vary. "They" are desert places he sees above earth—vast space between stars and lifeless surface of stars. "They" could be astronomers who tell of vast distances between stars. "They" could possibly be powers in control of such desert places. 4b. His feelings of loneliness and despair.

## Desert Places

ROBERT FROST

*We usually think of a desert as a hot, sandy, sun-baked land. But the word also means any barren, desolate place. As this poem shows, a desert can be a state of mind as well.*

1 Snow falling and night falling fast, oh, fast  
In a field I looked into going past,  
And the ground almost covered smooth in snow,  
But a few weeds and stubble showing last.

The woods around it have it—it is theirs.  
All animals are smothered° in their lairs.

2 I am too absent-spirited to count;  
The loneliness includes me unawares.

And lonely as it is, that loneliness  
Will be more lonely ere it will be less—  
A blanker whiteness of benighted° snow

3 With no expression, nothing to express.

They cannot scare me with their empty spaces  
Between stars—on stars where no human race is.  
I have it in me so much nearer home  
To scare myself with my own desert places.

5

6. **smothered:** here, asleep or hibernating.

10

11. **benighted:** overtaken by the night or darkness.

15

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. What mood is evoked in the first two stanzas of the poem? b. Which details of scene contribute to this mood?

2. What is the meaning of lines 7–8?

3. In stanza 3, the speaker looks into the future. a. What change does he foresee in the scene? b. In his mood?

4a. In stanza 4, who do you think "They" are? b. What does the speaker mean by his "own desert places"?

### Creative Writing

#### Describing a Scene in Nature

"I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" and "Loveliest of Trees" are about spring and the emotions nature evokes in the speakers. "Desert Places" is about a winter scene and the speaker's reaction to it. Write a brief essay describing a scene in summer or fall, and the emotions it stirs in you. Make your description as specific as you can, using words that communicate your feelings to the reader.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 51 / Selection Test 38 / Vocabulary Test 20 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 44

## PRESENTATION

One approach to “Recessional” is through music. If possible, provide a recording of the hymn for students to hear. Alternatively, you might arrange for accompaniment and let the class sing this stirring music as they study the lyric.

Inform students that this poem was written for Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee. Ask a student to report briefly on the nature of this celebration—for example, how Britain was encircled by watch fires, symbolizing the vigilance and glory of the nation. Have students consider why Kipling

wrote such a somber poem for a time of rejoicing.

You might want to discuss with students ways in which the United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth of Nations are great today. In what ways can the United States be called great?

# Recessional

**RUDYARD KIPLING**

*A recessional is the hymn that is sung as the choir and clergy are leaving the church at the end of a service. Rudyard Kipling wrote this poem in 1897, the year of England’s celebration of the sixtieth anniversary—the Diamond Jubilee—of the reign of Queen Victoria. In that year, England was at its height as a world power.*

God of our fathers, known of old,

**1** Lord of our far-flung battle line,  
Beneath whose awful Hand we hold

**2** Dominion over palm and pine—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

5

The tumult and the shouting dies;

The captains and the kings depart:

Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,

**3** An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

10

**4** Far-called, our navies melt away;

On dune and headland sinks the fire:

Lo, all our pomp of yesterday

Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!<sup>16</sup>

Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,

Lest we forget—lest we forget!

15

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose

Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,

Such boasting as the Gentiles<sup>21</sup> use,

Or lesser breeds without the Law<sup>22</sup>—

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,

**5** Lest we forget—lest we forget!

20

16. **Nineveh** (nĭn’ə-və) and **Tyre** (tĭr): great centers of ancient civilizations. According to the Bible, they neglected God’s commandments and decayed. 21. **Gentiles** (jĕn’tilz): here, in the Biblical sense of “outsider”—those who did not obey God’s Law. 22. **the Law**: the Hebrew Law of the Old Testament.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher’s Literature Companion*: Study Guide 51 / Selection Test 38 / Vocabulary Test 20 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 44

## Recessional

**1**

In 1897, Britain’s “battle line” circled the globe.

**2**

**Metaphor.** The “palm and pine” trees represent lands in tropical and temperate climates over which England ruled.

**3**

Implication of this stanza is that “an humble and contrite heart” will hold empire together better than captains and kings.

**4**

**To what does Kipling compare British pomp? What is Kipling’s warning in this stanza?** Compares British pomp to that of Nineveh and Tyre. Empire may be destroyed if England forgets God’s commandments.

**5**

**Refrain.** Repetition of “Lest we forget—lest we forget” suggests that England, in its pride, might forget God and put trust in war and conquest.



Do you agree with Kipling that we should not put trust in “reeking tube and iron shard”? Let the discussion be an open one. Be sure to encourage the class to consider the significance of the poem’s title.

6

**Metaphor.** “Reeking tube and iron shard” represents military power. Stanza suggests that human endeavors are built on dust, that God, not military power, is a nation’s true protector.

7

**Refrain.** Variation is a plea for mercy; suggests that pride and belief in military power rather than in God will destroy empire.

#### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Guns and bullets. 1b. Only a “heathen heart” would trust weapons; only God can “guard,” provide true security. 1c. God. 2a. Nineveh and Tyre. 2b. Navies are called to distant parts of empire. In attempt to control vast empire (l. 4), Britain may weaken her power. 2c. Might become too confident and careless. 3a. “Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,/Lest we forget—lest we forget.” 3b. Refrain indicates growing urgency of plea for God’s guidance. 3c. Kipling varies refrain in l. 17 and in ll. 29–30. Variations suggest God watches over His people and may exact vengeance if they break His laws. Refrain in last stanza is plea for mercy; suggests mercy will be needed because of pride.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

##### Robert Burns

Scotland’s foremost poet, Burns focuses on Romantic themes of the common man, natural beauty, local folklore, emotion, and instinct.

#### CLOSURE

Ask students to summarize the characteristics of lyric poetry and to write brief journal entries in which they use these characteristics to analyze one poem in this section. Then discuss the entries in class.

For heathen heart that puts her trust

25

6 In reeking tube and iron shard,<sup>o</sup>

All valiant dust that builds on dust,

And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,

For frantic boast and foolish word—

7 Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

30

26. **shard:** a hard or brittle fragment—here, a bullet from the “reeking tube” of a gun.

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. In what things does Kipling say his nation should not put its trust? b. Why should it reject these sources of power? c. On what would Kipling have his country rely?

2a. What examples does Kipling give to prove that success in war and conquest will not keep a nation great? b. Why, as an empire expands, might its power tend to “melt away”? c. How might a nation’s puffing up with a sense of its own importance hasten this process?

3. A word, a phrase, a line, or a group of lines that reappears from stanza to stanza is called a **refrain**. a. What lines does Kipling use as a refrain? b. How does the refrain grow in effect and meaning each time it is repeated in the poem? c. Where does Kipling vary the refrain and what new ideas are introduced in these variations?

### About the Authors

#### Robert Burns (1759–1796)



Robert Burns has sometimes been called the national poet of Scotland. He was born in Ayr in southwestern Scotland. His family was poor and Burns received little formal schooling. He learned

old Scottish songs and stories, and while he worked as a plowboy on his family’s farm, he composed many of his poems to the tunes of traditional Scottish songs. Burns is one of the greatest songwriters in English literature. Many of his poems have been set to music. Some well-known love poems are “Highland Mary,” “Sweet Afton,” and “The Banks o’ Doon.”

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

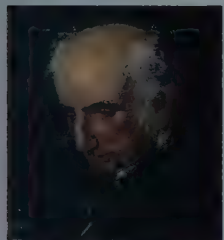
You may ask students to review the poems read earlier in this unit now that they have studied lyric poetry. Have students identify other lyric poems. Be sure that they can give reasons why each poem they select should be classified as

lyric.

Since the words to many popular songs are really lyric poems, ask students to study the lyrics of some popular songs that you have selected. Have them write brief explanations of the emotion(s) expressed in one of the songs. You may

then assign students to analyze the poem for imagery, figurative language, sound devices, and tone.

### William Wordsworth (1770–1850)



William Wordsworth is generally considered to be the first major Romantic poet in English literature and the greatest nature poet in the language. He was a leader in the rebellion

against the content and technique of eighteenth-century poetry. His idea of poetry is set forth in a famous document, the preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, a collection of poetry that marks the beginning of the Romantic period in English literature. In this preface, Wordsworth rejected the idea that the subject matter or language of poetry need be exalted or elegant. He emphasized that the language of poetry should be natural and that its subject matter should be drawn from everyday life.

### A. E. Housman (1859–1936)



Alfred Edward Housman, a renowned classical scholar, was professor of Latin at University College, London, and then at Trinity College, Cambridge. His literary reputation is largely

founded on *A Shropshire Lad*, a collection of sixty-three poems he published in 1896. The speaker in these poems is a farm lad of Shropshire whom Housman described as “an imaginary figure, with something of my own temper and view of life.” The poems are famous for their simple diction, their melody, and their craftsmanship.

### Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936)



Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay, India. When he was not quite six years old, he was sent to England for his education. He stayed there until he was seventeen, then returned to India

where he worked as a journalist. When he was twenty-one, he published a volume of light verse called *Departmental Ditties*, and a year later he published a collection of stories, *Plain Tales from the Hills*. By the time he returned to England from India in his mid-twenties, he was famous. Kipling’s work is characterized by its power and vitality. Some of his best-known novels are *The Light That Failed*, *Captains Courageous*, and *Kim*. Among his well-known poems are “If,” “The Ballad of East and West,” “Gunga Din,” “Danny Deever,” and “Mandalay.” In 1907 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature.

### William Wordsworth

A lawyer’s son orphaned at age thirteen, Wordsworth was strongly influenced by his younger sister Dorothy—his spiritual companion—and her love for nature. With Dorothy and his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge, he took a walking tour in 1707 through the Lake District around his home. The collaboration of Wordsworth and Coleridge resulted in the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798.

### A. E. Housman

Housman’s life was deeply influenced by his unhappy childhood. Often ill, physically frail and nervous, Housman distinguished himself only by his studies, as shown by the scholarship he won to Oxford. His poetry combines conventional form with an unconventional theme. His poetry is often pessimistic, even tragic in tone.

### Rudyard Kipling

As a newspaper writer in Lahore, India, Kipling developed his distinctive narrative style by writing poems and stories that satirized English society. In his early works, he sympathized with Indian natives and common soldiers, but he altered his focus after success made him a friend of generals and government officials. His last works deal with the English countryside rather than with issues relating to British power. His poetic strengths are close observation and an ear for rhythm and diction.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze and discuss three examples of **narrative poetry**—a folk ballad, a literary ballad, and a moralistic tale. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote points out that **narrative poetry**, which may be short or long, often includes a strong dramatic element. Tell students to look for this dramatic element as they read the following poems.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read these poems, the margin annotations, which focus on the elements of **narrative poetry**, will aid your analysis and discussion.

### Lord Randal

1

**Repetition.** Second half of each line is repeated in every stanza; serves to identify **speaker** and to clarify narrative.

2

Lines 5–6 imply that mother already suspects poisoning.

3

**Metaphor.** The phrase “make my bed” is often used in ballads; means “dig my grave.”

4

This **refrain** at the end of each stanza creates a songlike effect and emphasizes Lord Randal's impending death.

5

In several versions of this ballad, the meal is snakes; both eels and snakes suggest evil.

6

**What has happened to his bloodhounds?** Like Lord Randal, they were poisoned by broth.

7

**Refrain.** Varies here to show that speaker is near death. “Sick at the heart” suggests his impending death and the treachery of his “true-love.”

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** on p. 217 of the *Teacher's Manual* accompanies “All in green went my love riding” and helps students analyze pairs of adjectives.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Read or play a recording of an American folk ballad or cowboy ballad. Ask students to speculate about the characteristics that make the ballad distinctive. Tell them to look for these narrative qualities in the next three poems.

# NARRATIVE POETRY

Narrative poetry includes comparatively short works such as “The Charge of the Light Brigade” and long works like the *Odyssey*, an epic in twenty-four books. As you will see in the selections included here, there is often a strong dramatic element in narrative poems.

## Lord Randal

*This old version of a famous folk ballad tells a story through the dialogue of Lord Randal and his mother. Though the spelling may look strange, most of the words will be clear if pronounced aloud, and the lines will rhyme more closely than they appear to on the page.*

1 “O where hae° ye been, Lord Randal my son?

O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?”

“I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon,  
For I’m weary wi° hunting, and fain wald° lie down.”

1. **hae:** have

2 “Where got ye your dinner, Lord Randal my son?

Where got ye your dinner, my handsome young man?”

3 “I dined wi° my true-love; mother, make my bed soon,

4 For I’m weary wi° hunting, and fain wald lie down.”

5

“What got ye to your dinner, Lord Randal my son?

What got ye to your dinner, my handsome young man?”

5 “I got eels boiled in broo,° mother, make my bed soon,  
For I’m weary wi° hunting, and fain wald lie down.”

11. **eels boiled in broo** (brōō):  
eels in broth, a soup.

“What became of your bloodhounds, Lord Randal my son?

What became of your bloodhounds, my handsome young man?”

6 “O they swelled and they died; mother, make my bed soon,  
7 For I’m weary wi° hunting, and fain wald lie down.”

15

“O I fear ye are poisoned, Lord Randal my son!

O I fear ye are poisoned, my handsome young man!”

“O yes, I am poisoned; mother, make my bed soon,

7 For I’m sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down.”

20



## PRESENTATION

Provide students with a definition of **folk ballad**. Then ask students why "Lord Randal" might exist in different versions. After students have read the ballad, proceed with study questions. Have students support their theories about Lord

Randal's poisoning with evidence from ballad. Ask them to fill in details imaginatively. Have students then tell whether they would prefer a full story or ballad version. End with choral reading, perhaps with girls reading mother's questions and boys reading Lord Randal's answers.



*Falcon Hunt*. Fifteenth-century Franco-Flemish tapestry.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. Sometimes we must read between the lines of a poem to tell exactly what happens. This poem is like a short murder mystery. **a.** Who has poisoned Lord Randal? **b.** Which of the mother's questions indicate that she suspects, from the beginning, that something bad has happened?

2a. Why do you think Lord Randal does not

immediately tell his mother that he has been poisoned? **b.** In what ways is he "sick at the heart"?

3. Like most songs, folk ballads use repetition freely. Where do you find alliteration in this poem?

4a. Which phrases and lines form refrains (see page 382)? **b.** What variations occur in these refrains? **c.** How do the refrains help to build drama and suspense in the poem?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The art of tapestry-making reached its perfection in Flanders (today, a region that extends into parts of France, Belgium, and the Netherlands) in the 1400s. Tapestries, which usually portray scenes from history or mythology, are used as wall hangings and upholstery.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. His "true-love" has probably poisoned him. 1b. "Where got ye your dinner, Lord Randal my son?"

2a. He feels extremely weak and ill, wants to go to bed, and perhaps does not realize what has happened to him. Perhaps he is not willing to tell his mother what he knows. 2b. He is both mortally ill and disillusioned with love.

3. Wild wood, weary wi', wald (ll. 3–4), mother make my (l. 3), hae, handsome (l. 2).

4a. "Lord Randal my son" "my handsome young man," "For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down," "mother, make my bed soon." 4b. Last line varies: "For I'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down." 4c. Show relationship between mother and son—mother's anxiety and fear, son's reluctant response to each of her questions. Refrains follow additional evidence of Lord Randal's fate.

## PRESENTATION

Explain that Cummings' poem is a **literary ballad** which imitates the folk form. After the first oral reading, ask students to describe each scene of the ballad. Scene divisions are ll. 1–10, 11–20, 21–30, 31–35. They may need to arrange

sentences in normal order and to paraphrase.

Continue with the study questions. Have students discuss the different interpretations question 4 may evoke.

Some students may recognize certain conventional aspects of the lover as the hunter and the

beloved as the quarry. The last line might express the capitulation of the beloved who has been pursued and won. Students might search for a more explicit interpretation. Does the speaker realize that she is a victim? Does she literally die? Does she simply feel that her heart is dead? Has

# All in green went my love riding

e. e. cummings

*What characteristics does this poem share with the popular ballad?*

## All in green went my love riding

1

Irony. Image of the hunter in green (which is symbolic of life) is ironic because hunter brings death.

2

**Refrain.** This refrain—repeated in ll. 14, 24, and 34—emphasizes sinister quality of hounds.

3

Description of the deer as "merry" as they engage in fatal chase is ironic.

4

**Personification.** Bugle is personified as cruel singer because it is sounded by huntsman as a prelude to the pursuit and kill. This is a clue to speaker's attitude toward hunt.

5

*What literary element does "famished arrow" suggest? Why is the arrow "famished"?* Literary element suggested is **personification**. Arrow is without blood and death which satisfy its hunger.

1 All in green went my love riding  
on a great horse of gold  
into the silver dawn.

2 four lean hounds crouched low and smiling

3 the merry deer ran before.

5

Fleeter be they than dappled° dreams  
the swift sweet deer  
the red rare° deer.

6. **dappled:** speckled.

8. **rare:** very fine.

Four red roebuck° at a white water

4 the cruel bugle sang before.

10

9. **roebuck:** male roe deer, a type of small, swift deer.

Horn at hip went my love riding  
riding the echo down  
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling  
the level meadows ran before.

15

Softer be they than slippered sleep  
the lean lithe deer  
the fleet flown deer.

Four fleet does at a gold valley

5 the famished arrow sang before

20

Bow at belt went my love riding  
riding the mountain down  
into the silver dawn.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 52 / Selection Test 38 Vocabulary Test 20 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 45

the whole experience been a dream of beautiful but deadly pursuit? Is this a nightmarish fantasy of the coming of death? Why is "my love" apparently speechless and faceless though otherwise handsome? Since students are unlikely to agree on exactly what has happened, you may

have each one write an explanation.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling  
the sheer peaks ran before.

25

6 Paler be they than daunting° death  
the sleek slim deer  
the tall tense deer.

26. **daunting:** frightening.

Four tall stags at a green mountain  
7 the lucky hunter sang before.

30

All in green went my love riding  
on a great horse of gold  
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling  
8 my heart fell dead before.

35

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. This poem is a **literary ballad**. A literary ballad has a known author and is intended to be read rather than sung. It has several characteristics in common with folk ballads. Which lines and images in Cummings' poem establish the setting as far off in the past?

2. Certain images, such as those of the smiling dogs and the silver dawn, give the poem a strange, almost supernatural atmosphere. What other words and phrases give the landscape and animals an air of mystery?

3. Ballads often shift scenes rapidly, leaving gaps in the action. In this poem there are several abrupt shifts of scene as the hunter pursues different groups of deer. Where do these shifts occur?

4. In many old poems, the lover is described as a hunter pursuing the beloved. **a.** Who is the hunter's last "victim" in this poem? **b.** What is meant by the last line?

5. Like many ballads, this poem uses repetition and refrain. **a.** Which lines appear in exactly the same form from stanza to stanza? **b.** Which lines are repeated with slight variations?

6

Now aware of their plight, deer have become "pale" and "tense."

7

*Why do you think the hunter pursues more deer than he could possibly bring back?* Responses will vary. Perhaps it indicates fickleness, easy pursuit of any distraction, cruelty, or killing for the sake of killing.

8

This poem raises many questions about the fate of the speaker. Is she, in Renaissance tradition, one of deer he pursues? Is she killed by her beloved? Is her affection for him killed by his cruelty and his inability to love? Is green-dressed hunter death itself?

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Setting and diction resemble those in medieval ballads: references to loved one all in green, lean hounds, merry deer, red roebuck, the arrow, stags.

2. "Great horse of gold," "dappled dreams," "the cruel bugle," "riding the echo down," "slippered sleep," "gold valley," and "Paler . . . than daunting death."

3. Between ll. 10 and 11, 20 and 21, 30 and 31.

4a. The speaker. 4b. Responses will vary. It may mean that speaker has capitulated completely, has metaphorically been pursued and captured. Another possibility is that her love for hunter has died.

5a. Lines 1–3 and 31–33; ll. 4, 14, 24, and 34. 5b. Lines 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, and 35.



### LITERARY ELEMENTS

After reading the text explanation, students might again examine "Lord Randal" for folk ballad characteristics: suitability for singing, folk origin, four-line rhymed stanzas, strong and simple rhythm, use of dialogue, tragic incident, and gaps in the story. You might also want to comment on phrases that may be found not only in "Lord Randal" but also in many other ballads: "my handsome young man," "fain wald lie down," "make my bed," and "sick at heart."

### CREATIVE WRITING

Students will enjoy thinking of colorful characters and real-life heroes to feature in their original ballads. They may need your help in choosing refrains or in beating out ballad meters until they are sure of a pattern to follow. You may recommend the pattern in "Lord Randal" or the one provided in the *Teacher's Manual* (p. 218). Refer students to the ballad entry in the *Guide to Literary Terms and Techniques*.

## Literary Elements

### The Ballad

One of the most enduring types of narrative poetry is the **ballad**. The earliest ballads we have are called **folk ballads** or **popular ballads**. These poems were composed to be sung, and they survived by being passed along orally for generations. In the process, they were altered by storytellers, and over the years appeared in many different versions.

A ballad is usually composed in four-line rhymed stanzas, with strong, simple rhythm. Frequently the story is told through the dialogue of the characters. There is generally one central dramatic or tragic incident, told simply and briefly. Ballads often shift rapidly from scene to scene, or leave gaps in the story that must be filled in by the audience.

## Creative Writing

### Writing a Ballad

Ballads have been composed about various subjects: love, death, adventure, mystery, war. Many ballads deal with a famous figure from history or legend. A number of American ballads, for example, grew up around the exploits of the Western desperado Billy the Kid.

Choose a subject for a ballad. It may be based on a historical or legendary incident. You may choose some character in a television series or a cartoon strip as the hero or heroine of your ballad. If you wish, write a humorous ballad. Try to incorporate repetition and refrains in your ballad.



Detail from *The Departure* by Thomas Cole.

Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

## PRESENTATION

During the first oral reading, students might interpret this poem quite literally. Read the poem a second time to help them see its irony before you discuss the study questions. The speaker and his companions feel secure; they are overconfi-

dent. The warder and gate sound so small, yet they are deadly. The last three lines should elicit excellent discussion. Ask students about others who sold out for gold or silver (Benedict Arnold, Judas Iscariot). Ask whether anyone can be safe when greed supplants human loyalty. Continue

with discussion of **ballad** form, **meter**, **rhyme**, and sound devices. Students should be able to cite meter, **rhyme scheme** (abaab), and **alliteration** (ll. 2–3, 8, and 9–20).

# The Castle

**EDWIN MUIR**

All through that summer at ease we lay, And daily from the turret° wall We watched the mowers in the hay And the enemy half a mile away.		
1 They seemed no threat to us at all.	5	
2 For what, we thought, had we to fear With our arms and provender, load on load, Our towering battlements, tier on tier, And friendly allies drawing near On every leafy summer road.	10	2. <b>turret</b> : tower.
3 Our gates were strong, our walls were thick, So smooth and high, no man could win A foothold there, no clever trick Could take us, have us dead or quick.° Only a bird could have got in.	15	14. <b>quick</b> : alive.
What could they offer us for bait? Our captain was brave and we were true. . . . There was a little private gate,		
4 A little wicked wicket gate. The wizened° warder let them through.	20	20. <b>wizened</b> : (wīz'ənd) wrinkled.
5 Oh then our maze of tunneled stone° Grew thin and treacherous as air. The cause was lost without a groan. The famous citadel° overthrown, And all its secret galleries° bare.	25	21. <b>maze . . . stone</b> : the stone castle, designed to confuse and repel enemies. 24. <b>citadel</b> : fortress. 25. <b>galleries</b> : halls.
How can this shameful tale be told? I will maintain until my death We could do nothing, being sold;		
6 Our only enemy was gold, And we had no arms to fight it with.	30	

## The Castle

**1**  
**Foreshadowing.** Speaker feels secure in the castle, but "seemed" in this line and "we thought" in l. 6 are clues that speaker's feeling of security is an illusion.

**2**  
Well-armed, stocked with food, and in a strong castle, the people feel they can withstand a long siege.

**3**  
**Irony.** Lines 11–17 are ironic, especially emphasis on "true" defenders and rhetorical question that in fact has an answer: "gold."

**4**  
**Alliteration.** Alliteration and word play in "wicked wicket" and "wizened warder" emphasize baseness of betrayal.

**5**  
Speaker realizes that strongest stone defenses are useless once enemy is within.

**6**  
All their defenses were directed against physical attack; they had no weapons to fight treachery of one for whom gold was more important than loyalty and honor.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to summarize the characteristics of **narrative poetry**. Request that students describe what makes this form of poetry enjoyable to read.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Castle was strong and well-provisioned, allies were approaching, captain was brave, and defenders were true. 1b. An old warder accepted bribe and let enemy in through "little wicked wicket gate."

2a. Enemies easily invaded every part of great castle. 2b. Surprised occupants of castle had to surrender, and their side lost. 2c. Was no battle with groans and shouts of combat.

3. His theme of betrayal is universal.

4a. Lines 28–30. 4b. Responses will vary. One suggestion is that we are lost when material things are valued more than human loyalty.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### E. E. Cummings

Cummings' life and poetry are an interesting combination of the conventional and unconventional. One of the American expatriates in France in the 1920s, he experimented with unusual typographical forms in poetry. His themes are the humanistic ones of family, youth, nature, and individuality.

### Edwin Muir

Raised a strict Calvinist, Muir spent his life overcoming many harsh beliefs of his youth—one being that poetry was a vanity. Muir initially resolved this conflict by writing ballads. He developed the idioms and rhythms of his ballads and later wrote other kinds of poetry as well.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ask students to bring to class other versions of "Lord Randal" or other examples of **folk ballads** and **literary ballads**, including some set to music. The *Teacher's Manual* (p. 220) includes suggestions.

Have students write essays comparing and contrasting Cummings' literary ballad with the folk ballad "Lord Randal." Encourage students to focus on content, color **symbolism**, **figurative language**, **diction**, and **tone**.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1a. What made the inhabitants of the castle feel safe, even though the enemy was near?

b. What deed or action caused the castle to fall into enemy hands?

2a. What does the fifth stanza mean?

b. What "cause" was lost? c. In what sense was it lost "without a groan"?

3. You are never told what castle, what battle, or what war the speaker refers to. Why do you think the poet deliberately refrains from setting the narrative in a specific locale at a specific time?

4. The speaker's story has a moral. a. Which lines in the poem might be taken as a statement of that moral? b. Tell in your own words what they mean.

## About the Authors

### E. E. Cummings (1894–1962)



Edward Estlin Cummings was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He attended Harvard University. During World War I he enlisted in the French Ambulance Corps, then served in

the United States Infantry. After the war he divided his time between New York and Paris. Unlike many poets, he was able to support himself entirely through the sale and reading of his poems. Cummings experimented with visual and verbal devices to communicate to his readers the beauty and freshness of what he saw around him.

### Edwin Muir (1887–1959)

Edwin Muir was born in Orkney, Scotland. For many years, Muir was known as a critic, teacher, and translator. Not until he was almost sixty did he publish a book of poems, *The Voyager*. This book, and the following one, *The Labyrinth*, established him as a major poet.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to distinguish between the points of view of each **speaker** in dramatic poems. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Vocabulary Activity** in the *Teacher's Manual* (p. 221) will give students practice in solving analogies.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Arrange for a student reading of a dramatic poem such as E. V. Rieu's "Sir Smashum Uppe." Help students to see poem's dramatic qualities and tell them to look for similar qualities in the poems they are about to read.

# DRAMATIC POETRY

In dramatic poetry there are characters who speak in their own person, just like characters in a stage play. In some dramatic poems there are two speakers and the poem consists largely of their dialogue. A special kind of dramatic poem is the *dramatic monologue*, or *dramatic lyric*, in which a speaker addresses someone whose presence is implied.

## The Seven Ages of Man

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

*The speaker of this poem is Jaques, a character in As You Like It. What impression do you form of Jaques from his speech?*

- 1 All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players.  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
2 And one man in his time plays many parts,  
3 His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,  
Mewling° and puking in the nurse's arms.  
4 Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,  
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad  
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,  
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,°  
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,  
5 Seeking the bubble reputation  
6 Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,  
In fair round belly with good capon° lined,  
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,  
Full of wise saws and modern instances,°  
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts  
7 Into the lean and slippered Pantaloone°  
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,  
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide

5  
6. **Mewling:** whimpering, whining.

10  
12. **pard:** leopard.

15  
16. **capon:** chicken.

18. **saws and modern instances:** old sayings and obvious examples.

20 20. **Pantaloone:** a foolish old man. Pantaloone was a stock character in Italian comedies.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The introduction to this section emphasizes the distinguishing characteristic of **dramatic poetry**, the manner of presentation. Remind students that a dramatic poem is always addressed to a particular person.

## USING THE ANNOTATIONS

After students have read the poems, the margin annotations will aid discussion of **figurative language** and other poetic elements.

## The Seven Ages of Man

1  
**Metaphor.** World as stage extends throughout poem.

2  
**What are "many parts"?** They are different roles people play during their lifetime.

3  
Details show that Jaques sees infant as repulsive rather than innocent, beautiful.

4  
**To what is schoolboy compared? What does description of schoolboy suggest?** Schoolboy is compared to a snail. Speaker stereotypes youth's lack of interest in school.

5  
**Bubble:** insubstantial, short-lived. Emphasizes folly of seeking fame in battle.

6  
**Satire.** Jaques ridicules complacency of mature man, well fed and full of clichés.

7  
**Allusion.** Reference to stock character in theater strengthens **metaphor** of life as stage play.

## PRESENTATION

Remind students that Shakespeare was an experienced actor as well as a playwright. In several of his plays, he compared human life to acting in a play. For example, in *Macbeth*, he wrote "Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player / That struts

and frets his hour upon the stage / And then is heard no more."

Tell students that this poem is a speech in *As You Like It*, a delightful Shakespearean comedy with romantic complications and cheerful philosophizing of characters in exile in the Forest of

Arden. Good Duke Senior and four pairs of young lovers figure in the action. The **speaker** Jaques, although a loyal lord to the duke, is different in attitude—chronically glum and pessimistic. Emphasize that Jaques is the speaker—not Shakespeare.

8

The "play" comes full circle, with actor—or person—returning to physical and mental condition of infancy.

9

Pessimism shown in speech is that of speaker Jaques—not Shakespeare; Jaques portrays last age as that of "oblivion . . . sans everything."

For his shrunk shank,<sup>o</sup> and his big manly voice,

8 Turning again toward childish treble, pipes

9 And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,

That ends this strange eventful history,

Is second childishness and mere oblivion,<sup>o</sup>

Sans<sup>o</sup> teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

23. **shrunk shank:** shrunken legs.

25

27. **oblivion:** forgetfulness.

28. **Sans:** without.

*Seven Ages of Man* by William Mulready (1786–1863). Oil on canvas.

Victoria and Albert Museum

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

Mulready based his painting *Seven Ages of Man* on the frontispiece that he had already designed for John Van Voorst's book of the same title. The painting, which illustrates Mulready's style of combining great quantities of light, color, and shadow, was exhibited in 1838 at the Royal Academy in London. The much-lauded painting attempts to portray Jaques' pessimistic musings in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. The background architecture in the painting was probably inspired by nineteenth-century Drury Lane stage productions, reproduced today in engravings. The painting itself captures the ugliness of Jaques' vision.



You will probably want to have this selection read aloud. This speech is ideal for small-group dramatizations, such as costumed pantomimes with a reading. Following such dramatizations, you could initiate a discussion of the study questions. You might also ask students to consider

which "ages" they have already experienced and which they have ahead of them. How would the students describe these ages? Point out that the first lines of this passage are frequently memorized and quoted.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The speaker of this poem is a character named Jaques (jā'kwēz) from one of Shakespeare's comedies, *As You Like It*. In the speech Jaques tells what life is like: a great stage on which people play a variety of roles as they age. **a.** How does Jaques' description make each age sound unpleasant, silly, or futile? **b.** What words and images create these impressions about each age?
2. Some of Jaques' descriptions are comic. **a.** Point out lines, such as that of the lover "sighing like furnace," that make fun of some of the "characters" people play. **b.** Does the last line strike you as humorous? If not, what tone does it have?
3. Shakespeare uses several vivid similes and metaphors that show us how Jaques feels about life. Jaques shows his contempt for fame by referring to reputation as a "bubble." Point out some other figures of speech and tell how they are effective in revealing Jaques' attitudes.

## Literary Elements

### Dramatic Poetry

Dramatic poetry is poetry that resembles a play in some way. A dramatic poem may be in the form of a dialogue between two or more people, or the speaker may be talking to someone who does not answer but whose presence is understood. Many narrative poems are also dramatic. "Lord Randal" (page 384) is a dialogue between two characters. **Who are the speakers? Who is the speaker in "The Castle" (page 389)? To whom do you think he is telling his shameful tale?**

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Describes disagreeable aspect of each. 1b. Infant is "mewling and puking." Schoolboy whines and creeps. Lover sighs and relates sad tale to mistress. Soldier swears, quarrels, and risks his life for "bubble reputation." The justice, looking stout and severe, is full of clichés. Old man talks in "childish treble." Senile man has lost teeth, eyesight, taste, and all else.
- 2a. Schoolboy sounds comic because of contrast between his "shining morning face" and creeping pace (ll. 7–9); lover because of his "woeful ballad" (ll. 9–11); the justice because of his overfed belly and pompous speeches (ll. 15–19); and Pantaloon because of his "youthful hose . . . a world too wide/For his shrunk shank" and his voice that "pipes and whistles" (ll. 19–25).
- 2b. Last line describes senile person deprived of all faculties. Jaques' tone here is sardonic.
3. Simile of schoolboy "creeping like snail/Unwillingly to school" shows his low opinion of boy or school or both. Similes comparing lover to furnace and soldier to cat also show Jaques' derisive attitude.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Lord Randal and his mother.
2. Betrayed defender.
3. Responses will vary. Anyone willing to listen.



## PRESENTATION

You might provide some biographical background about Christina Rossetti and her brother Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who was one of the Pre-Raphaelites, a group of English artists who wished to return to the vitality of Italian art

before Raphael.

Arrange for two students to read the poem as a dialogue, differentiating lines of the two speakers and rehearsing for good interpretation. Use the study questions as a guide for class discussion. Be sure that students understand the

symbolism of the uphill journey as well as the attitudes of each **speaker** in the poem.

## Uphill

1

**Tone.** Questions (ll. 1 and 3) are straightforward, while tone of answers (ll. 2 and 4) suggests something more than ordinary journey. "The very end" in reply suggests finality (death).

2

**What does the "resting place" or "inn" symbolize?** Grave or heaven.

3

**Symbol.** If inn symbolizes heaven, beds are rest; if it symbolizes graveyard, they are graves. Both may apply.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Life. 1b. Heaven. 1c. Uphill road, duration of journey from morning to night, need for resting place during "slow dark hours," certainty of finding "inn," presence of wayfarers who have "gone before," assurance of not being kept "standing at that door," and promise of comfort for "all who seek" rest.

2a. Eager to learn about his or her journey and destination; seems concerned about other wayfarers as well. 2b. Warm, friendly, kind, optimistic.

3a. Lines for the questioning voice are not indented, end with question marks. Lines for answering voice are indented, end with periods. Questions are in lines of approximately equal length; answers vary in length according to need, short and to point or longer and comforting. 3b. Scheme is *abab cdcd efef ghgh*. 3c. Lines of each speaker rhyme.

4. Responses will vary. May mean struggle toward afterlife.

# Uphill

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

*Who are the questioner and answerer in this poem?*

1 Does the road wind uphill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

2 But is there for the night a resting place?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?

Of labor you shall find the sum.

3 Will there be beds for me and all who seek?

Yea, beds for all who come.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. At first this poem seems to be simply about a traveler preparing for a journey. But the poem has a symbolic level too. a. What might this journey stand for? b. What might the inn symbolize? c. What clues in the poem point to these symbolic meanings?

2a. How would you describe the attitude of the questioner? b. What is the tone of the answers? Are they optimistic, reassuring, frightening, cynical?

3a. How does the poet use line length, indentation, and punctuation to show that there are two speakers in the poem? b. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? c. How does it help identify the speakers?

4. Explain the title of the poem.

## PRESENTATION

Tell students that the Erl-King is a mythical creature from German folklore who does evil to children. Ask them to consider, as they read, why the tale came into being, or what natural phenomenon is explained by the creation of such a

character. He may have been invented to explain deaths of children, or parents may have used the threat of the Erl-King to make children behave.

A lively oral reading, perhaps a choral reading by two or three students, would be an effective way to present the poem to the class. Use the

study questions to help students interpret the dramatic action and mood of the poem. If possible, play a recording of Franz Schubert's version of Goethe's poem and discuss the musical interpretation.

# The Erl-King

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Translated by  
Sir Walter Scott

*There are three characters in this dramatic poem: a father, his child, and the Erl-King (der Erbkönig), a folklore spirit who does mischief and evil, especially to children.*

O who rides by night thro' the woodland so wild?

1 It is the fond father embracing his child;

2 And close the boy nestles within his loved arm.

To hold himself fast, and to keep himself warm.

"O father, see yonder! see yonder!" he says;

"My boy, upon what dost thou fearfully gaze?"

3 "O, 'tis the Erl-King with his crown and his shroud."

"No, my son, it is but a dark wreath of the cloud."

*(The Erl-King speaks)*

"O come and go with me, thou loveliest child;

4 By many a gay sport shall thy time be beguiled;

My mother keeps for thee full many a fair toy,

And many a fine flower shall she pluck for my boy."

"O father, my father, and did you not hear

The Erl-King whisper so low in my ear?"

"Be still, my heart's darling—my child, be at ease;

5 It was but the wild blast as it sung thro' the trees."

*(Erl-King)*

"O wilt thou go with me, thou loveliest boy?

6 My daughter shall tend thee with care and with joy;

She shall bear thee so lightly thro' wet and thro' wild,

And press thee, and kiss thee, and sing to my child."

7 "O father, my father, and saw you not plain

The Erl-King's pale daughter glide past thro' the rain?"

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 55 / Selection Test 38*

## The Erl-King

1

**Fond** means "excessively loving" here but also connotes archaic meaning of "foolishly trusting," as the father trusts his own senses too much.

2

**Foreshadowing.** These lines ironically allude to ending of poem; here boy tries to keep warm and safe as if he has a premonition of his fate.

3

**Imagery.** Each time boy sees or hears the supernatural, father perceives only the natural. However, both "shroud" and "dark wreath of the cloud" are ominous images.

4

Erl-King tries to entice boy to go with him with promises of games, toys, and new parents.

5

**What is the "wild blast"? What does it suggest?** Wind, suggestive of death.

6

Erl-King promises that his daughter will treat him lovingly.

7

In spite of promise, boy does not want to go with Erl-King; begs his father to see danger.

8

When warm entreaties do not succeed, Erl-King coldly threatens.

9

Father realizes danger too late.

10

**Alliteration.** *D* sounds are ominous; child's attempts to alert father and to remain safe and warm have failed.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to write a paragraph discussing the effectiveness of the picture reproduced here as an illustration for "The Erl-King." Does it convey the mood of the poem? Would they make changes if they were painting the picture?

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. Responses will vary. Perhaps child has vivid imagination and often acts in such a manner; Erl-King may make himself visible and audible only to boy; or father may not believe or may not want to believe in Erl-King. 1b. Dismisses child's fear; gives natural explanations for things boy sees and hears. 1c. When boy says the Erl-King has seized him.

2a. Erl-King promises boy games, toys, and flowers; tells boy that he will be well cared for by his daughter, who will love and sing to boy. 2b. They mean boy will be taken away from his family. They also sound fearful because they are whispered in a low voice.

3. Setting—a dark, stormy winter night made ghostly by clouds that cross path of moonlight.

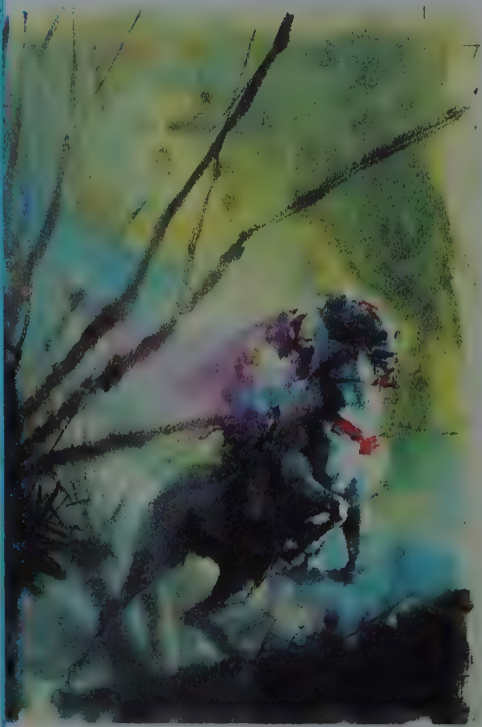
"O yes, my loved treasure, I knew it full soon;  
It was the gray willow that danced to the moon."

(*Erl-King*)

8 "O come and go with me, no longer delay,  
Or else, silly child, I will drag thee away."  
"O father! O father! now, now, keep your hold,  
The Erl-King has seized me—his grasp is so cold!" 25

9 Sore trembled the father; he spurr'd thro' the wild,  
Clasping close to his bosom his shuddering child; 30

10 He reaches his dwelling in doubt and in dread,  
But, clasp'd to his bosom, the infant was dead.



Private Collection

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Poem

1. The child is aware of the Erl-King's presence, but his father is not. a. Why do you think this is so? b. How does the father react to the child's fear? c. At what point does he sense danger?

2a. What does the Erl-King promise the boy? b. Why are these promises fearful?

3. What elements contribute to the mysterious and supernatural atmosphere of the poem?

### Extending Your Study

#### Listening to a Musical Interpretation

Goethe's poem was set to music by Franz Schubert and is often performed in concert. Locate a recording of the song to share with the class. Discuss the effectiveness of Schubert's interpretation of the mood and tragic events of the poem.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to summarize the characteristics of dramatic poetry and to explain why it is enjoyable to read.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Some students might enjoy illustrating scenes from "The Erl-King," featuring their interpretations of the Erl-King himself. The picture on p. 396 is one such interpretation.

Ask students to rewrite "The Seven Ages of

Man" speech from the point of view of a cheerful and optimistic person. Have students start their descriptions of each age with Shakespeare's words but continue with different images. Students can work as a class, in small groups, or individually.

## About the Authors

### Christina Rossetti (1830–1894)



Christina Rossetti came from one of the most remarkable artistic families in England. Her father was an Italian poet whose political verses so angered his enemies that he had to flee to Eng-

land for his life. Her brother Dante Gabriel was a leading poet and painter, and another brother, Michel, was a writer, editor, and influential art critic. Her sister Maria was a teacher and critic who later became a nun. Christina Rossetti, like her father and brothers, was artistic, and like her sister, intensely religious. She spent the last fifteen years of her life almost totally withdrawn from the world, performing devotional acts and writing. She died, as she probably would have wished, while at prayer.

### Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)



Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was a famous German poet, dramatist, and novelist whose wide interests also extended into science, law, and philosophy. Goethe spent a happy childhood in

Frankfurt and later studied and practiced law before beginning his writing career. A drama published in 1773 brought him his first recognition, and he became famous the next year with a novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. Goethe was invited to the court of Charles Augustus, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, in 1775. He remained there for the rest of his life, at one time serving as the Duke's chief minister. His travels in Italy, and his friendship with Schiller, another German writer and philosopher, did much to influence his writings. His finest work, the one on which his fame rests, is his long poetic drama, *Faust*.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

### Christina Rossetti

Raised a strict Anglican, Rossetti lived a cloistered life, refusing to marry and dedicating her life to God. Having little contact with the outside world, she wrote poems that reflected her inner feelings, especially conflict between her love of beauty and her commitment to a life of abstinence.

### Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Goethe began his career with the romantic novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, moved through a classical period, and then returned to his earlier emotional and Romantic style. His works reflect his attempt to see each phenomenon as part of an organic whole, his preference for gothic settings, and his interest in the inner conflict and development of the individual. His masterpiece *Faust* deals in part with the temptation to exalt the search for knowledge over human values.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of the skills needed to read and analyze poetry.

## PRESENTATION

You might begin by listing poetic elements students have studied, such as **diction**, **imagery**, and **figurative language**. You might also refer students to the **Close Reading** activity and to the **Guidelines for Reading a Poem** at the

beginning of the unit.

This section can be best used for oral discussion. The questions in the exercise are intended to be thought-provoking and do not require answers except when directed to a specific selection.

## ANALYZING A POEM

1. Some descriptive titles are "The Cloud," "The Meadow Mouse," "The Fawn," "At Woodward's Gardens," and "The Castle." Some titles suggestive of meaning are "Dream Deferred," "Empty House," "It Bids Pretty Fair," "Next!," "Desert Places," and "Uphill."

2. Poetry is meant to be read aloud. Reader should be aware of the arrangement of words and lines of the poem on the page. If poem has an unusual shape, students should speculate on the poet's reasons for this.

3. In poetry, words commonly have more than one relevant meaning. Thus students should identify both denotations and connotations of the words in the poems.

4. The diction in the poem may help identify the speaker. It is also important to determine whom speaker is addressing. Inform students that poems occasionally have more than one speaker.

5. Remind students that imagery is language that suggests the way things look, sound, smell, taste, or feel. Figurative language, which always makes use of a comparison of different things, consists of simile, metaphor, and personification.

6. In addition to repetition of words and phrases, such as in a refrain, sounds in words may be repeated. Rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and onomatopoeia are sound devices that contribute to the meaning of a poem.

7. Students might consider the following questions to determine structure of a poem: How many lines are in each stanza? What is the rhyme scheme? Is there a refrain? Is the poem a particular type, such as a sonnet, a ballad, or free verse?

# DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

## Analyzing a Poem

This unit has focused on the skills needed to read poetry for appreciation and understanding. Here are some suggestions that will be useful to you in independent reading and analysis.

1. *What does the title reveal about the subject of the poem or about its theme?* In "The Destruction of Sennacherib" (page 334), the title is important since the word *Sennacherib* never appears in the poem itself. Look through the titles of the poems in this unit. Which titles are merely descriptive and which are suggestive of meaning or theme?

2. *Read the poem aloud.* Pay attention to punctuation and read the poem in complete phrases or sentences, not in lines. Where a poem does not make use of punctuation to indicate pauses, as in "400-meter Freestyle" (page 356), follow the units of thought indicated by individual lines and the natural rhythm of the language.

3. *Make sure you know the meanings of all the words in the poem.* Poets often make use of unusual word meanings. At times, they coin new words. Poets also rely on connotative meanings of words so that a word like *run* in "It Bids Pretty Fair" (page 323) has different associations. Refer to a dictionary when the meaning of a word is not clear from context.

4. *Identify the speaker of the poem.* Determine if the voice in the poem is that of the poet or a fictional character invented by the poet, as in "The Castle" (page 389). What characteristics are attributed to the speaker? What is the tone of the poem?

5. *Look for imagery and figurative language in the poem.* Are the images and figures of speech well chosen? Point out and explain symbols and allusions.

6. *Be aware of devices of sound and their purpose.* Does the poet repeat any words or phrases? What ideas are reinforced by repetition? How is the sound of the poem related to its sense, or meaning?

7. *Determine the structure of the poem.* Describe its form and pattern in terms of stanza, rhyme scheme, and meter. It may be useful to make an outline of the sections of a poem.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to write a paraphrase of a poem.

## PRESENTATION

Students have learned through this unit the skills needed to read poetry for pleasure and understanding. This first part of **Practice in Reading and Writing** offers them experience in paraphrasing a poem. Since students have para-

phrased passages in poems earlier in this unit, this exercise should not prove too difficult. It can stimulate discussion.

The second part of the section provides students with an opportunity to compare two poems. This activity may be best used for oral

# PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

## Paraphrasing a Poem

To paraphrase a poem means to restate it in your own words. Paraphrase is often a convenient way to simplify a poem's content. To test your paraphrase of a line or sentence, check that it makes sense within the context of the poem. A paraphrase is helpful in learning what a poem means, but should never be substituted for the poem itself.

Here is a short lyric by George Gordon, Lord Byron, noted for its musical qualities:

### So We'll Go No More a-Roving

So we'll go no more a-roving

So late into the night,

Though the heart be still as loving

And the moon be still as bright.

For the sword outwears the sheath, 5

And the soul wears out the breast,

And the heart must pause to breathe,

And love itself have rest.

Though the night was made for loving,

And the day returns too soon, 10

Yet we'll go no more a-roving

By the light of the moon.

This poem laments that time, circumstances, and fatigue force the speaker to slow down and live less fully than he did in his youth. The first stanza might be paraphrased thus: "We won't go roaming about until it's quite late any more, even though our hearts are still capable of love and joy, and the moon still shines brightly."

The *sense* of the lines is there, but not their music.

Paraphrase the remaining two stanzas of the poem so that their content is clear and perfectly understandable. Then return to the poem itself to see how Byron has expressed these ideas with great economy and beauty.

## Comparing Two Poems

One way to understand a poem better is by comparing it with a poem that is similar in subject, theme, or meaning. You may have read "Uphill" by Christina Rossetti (page 394). Compare that poem with this poem by Emily Dickinson:

### What Inn Is This

What inn is this

Where for the night

Peculiar traveler comes?

Who is the landlord?

Where the maids? 5

Behold, what curious rooms!

No ruddy fires on the hearth,

No brimming tankards flow.

Necromancer, landlord,

Who are these below? 10

Read and reread these poems carefully, using the procedures you have learned. Look up any unfamiliar words. Paraphrase any lines or sentences that seem difficult or obscure. When you feel you understand both poems, compare them in an essay. In your essay, include answers to the following questions:

## PARAPHRASING A POEM

The last two stanzas of the poem may be paraphrased as follows:

Just as a sword lasts longer than its sheath and the soul outlives the body, so love outlasts physical endurance. People must take care of their health and sleep for a while. Though night is the ideal time to show love for someone and though day comes too quickly, you and I will no longer roam in the moonlight.

## COMPARING TWO POEMS

Ask students to answer the following questions (p. 400) in their journal before they begin their essays. These answers—which might be more helpful arranged in two lists, one for each poem—can serve as effective prewriting for this assignment. Encourage revision of rough drafts and proofreading of final drafts.



discussion.

The third part of the section features a number of statements by critics and poets about the nature of poetry. Students are asked to use one or more of the statements as the main idea in an essay about the poetry they have read. Before

proceeding with this lesson, you may wish to review capitalization and punctuation rules for quotations used in a composition.

### Answers

1. Both poems use inn as a symbol for the grave.

2. Mood of Dickinson's poem, which contains no answers, is one of wonder, curiosity, mystery, and apprehension. Mood of Rossetti's poem, which provides pleasant and comforting answers to questions, is friendly, gentle, and reassuring.

3. Speaker in "What Inn Is This" is person looking curiously and anxiously at strange inn where people stay after death. "Uphill" has two speakers—questioner who needs to know more about journey and inn, and comforter who provides reassuring answers.

4. Responses will vary. Both poems use rhyme and meter, but Dickinson uses more unusual words. Rossetti provides reassuring answers that promise rest and immortality; Dickinson provides no answers to the speaker's haunting questions and includes no religious assurance.

### WHAT IS POETRY?

Remind students to include evidence from poems to support their thesis.

Authors of these quotations:

1. William Wordsworth.
2. Robert Frost.
3. Edgar Allan Poe.
4. Samuel Johnson.
5. Matthew Arnold.
6. John Ciardi.

1. What is similar about the subjects of the poems?
2. What is similar or dissimilar about the moods or tones created by the two poems?
3. Who are the speakers in the poems? How do the speakers and their situations resemble or differ from one another?
4. What other similarities and differences can you find in the ideas and methods used in the two poems?

### What Is Poetry?

Below are a number of statements by critics and poets about the nature of poetry. Use one (or more) of them as the main idea in any essay about the poetry you have read, referring to two or three of the poems in this book as examples. You may, of course, either agree or disagree with any of these ideas.

1. "Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."
2. "A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom."
3. "Poetry is the rhythmical creation of beauty in words."
4. "Poetry is the art of uniting pleasure with truth."
5. "Poetry is simply the most beautiful, impressive, and widely effective mode of saying things."
6. "The success of the poem is determined not by how much the poet felt in writing it, but how much the reader feels in reading it."

## For Further Reading

Adoff, Arnold, editor, *Celebrations: A New Anthology of Black American Poetry* (Follett, 1977)

Eighty-five black poets—including Arna Bontemps, Gwendolyn Brooks, Robert Hayden, and Langston Hughes—write about the tradition and future of black Americans. The poems are arranged around themes such as “The Idea of Ancestry,” “The Southern Road,” and “For Each of You.”

Bierhorst, John, editor, *In the Trail of the Wind: American Indian Poems and Ritual Orations* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1971; paperback)

Here are omens, battle songs, love lyrics, prayers, and mysterious incantations translated from more than forty languages and representing the best-known Indian cultures of North and South America.

Bruchac, Joseph, editor, *Songs from This Earth on Turtle's Back: An Anthology of Poetry by American Indian Writers* (Greenfield Rev. Press, 1983)

De la Mare, Walter, *Peacock Pie* (Faber & Faber, 1958; paperback, 1980)

This collection includes fun-to-read poems.

Dunning, Stephen, et al., editors, *Reflections on a Gift of Watermelon Pickle . . . And Other Modern Verse* (Scott, Foresman, 1966)

The three hundred poems in this anthology have been compiled especially for young people. The book begins with Eve Merriam's advice on “How to Eat a Poem.”

Fuller, Roy, *Fellow Mortals: An Anthology of Animal Verse* (Merrimack, 1984)

Henderson, Harold G., editor and translator, *An Introduction to Haiku: An Anthology of Poems and Poets from Bashō to Shiki* (Doubleday, 1958)

Collected here are fine examples of haiku by masters of this lyric form.

Larrick, Nancy, *Room for Me and a Mountain Lion: Poetry of the Open Space* (M. Evans, 1974)

Leach, MacEdward, editor, *The Ballad Book* (A. S. Barnes, 1955)

Here are two hundred and fifty English, Scottish, and American storytelling poems.

Millay, Edna St. Vincent, *Collected Sonnets* (paperback, Harper & Row, 1986)

This book includes the first sonnet the author wrote when she was fifteen years old.

Peck, Richard, editor, *Pictures That Storm Inside My Head* (paperback, Avon, 1976)

In poems and themes selected for young people, this anthology presents works by such poets as Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes, James Dickey, Marianne Moore, and E. E. Cummings.

Plotz, Helen, editor, *Eye's Delight: Poems of Art and Architecture* (Greenwillow, 1983)

Sandburg, Carl, *The American Songbag* (paperback, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970)

Here are the words and music to two hundred and eighty songs and ballads sung in the making of America.

Solley, George, and Eric Steinbaugh, editors, *Moods of the Sea: Masterworks of Sea Poetry* (Naval Inst. Press, 1981)

Here are more than two hundred poems on the subject of the sea.

### FOR FURTHER READING

Listed are titles of poetry collections and brief annotations that may help students locate poetry that especially appeals to them. You may want to make poetry the focus for a class visit to the school library. Have each student choose a book of poems and select a poem to read or illustrate for the class. Extra credit might be given for analysis of a poem according to guidelines in *Developing Skills in Critical Thinking* on p. 398.

# TEACHING GUIDE

## DRAMA

### OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

Drama is distinct from other traditional forms of literature because it is intended to be performed, but it is important for the students to remember that all plays begin with words. The best drama can be read and appreciated as some of the best literature mankind has created.

The history of drama dates back more than 2500 years when Greek writers created plays that were, for the first time, intended primarily for entertainment. Previously, drama had been religious in nature and was usually performed by priests for the moral edification of the audience. The Greek playwrights originated the two distinct types of drama that have endured to the present day, tragedy and comedy. Aristotle described and analyzed these two forms in his book *Poetics*, and his principles of drama have influenced writers for more than two thousand years.

The Romans borrowed heavily from Greek culture for all their arts, and for none more than drama. Roman plays usually dealt with Greek themes and prominently featured Greek gods with Latin names. The original Roman plays of the time were frequently bawdy comedies.

The Middle Ages saw a return to drama that served a primarily religious function, and few great plays were created during that time. The Roman Catholic Church viewed drama as nothing more than a practical means of teaching the gospel to illiterates. Biblical dramas, morality plays, and plays about the lives of the saints, called "miracle plays," constituted most of the drama in medieval times.

By Shakespeare's time, drama had drifted away from religious themes. The subjects of plays were the lives and destinies of aristocratic figures. Historical drama also became an important genre during this time; many of Shakespeare's best plays are loosely based on historical people and events.

Since the late nineteenth century, realistic plays have dominated world drama. Playwrights have come to view the theater as an arena in which the serious conflicts and problems facing contemporary mankind can be confronted and dealt with directly. American playwrights have been particularly successful in creating probing, psychological drama that touches the lives of generation after generation of theater audiences.

This drama unit includes four distinctive plays of diverse appeal: the one-act farce *A Marriage Proposal* by Anton Chekhov, the science-fiction teleplay *Visit to a Small Planet* by Gore Vidal, the suspenseful television play *Thunder on Sycamore Street* by Reginald Rose, and the popular romantic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare. As in previous units, each selection is followed by discussion questions, exercises in language and vocabulary, suggestions for compositions, and other learning activities.

If you prefer to divide the plays, you can place them effectively

with other types of selections. *A Marriage Proposal*, with its amusing situation and exaggerated characters, could follow the plot and character sections of the short-story unit. Around the satirical *Visit to a Small Planet*, you might group other selections that take a critical viewpoint toward human nature and experience: for example, "The Cask of Amontillado" (p. 95), "War" (p. 39), "The Balek Scales" (p. 181), and "Dream Deferred" (p. 306). *Thunder on Sycamore Street* could fit well in a study of suspense or theme. *Romeo and Juliet* could culminate a Shakespeare unit including Sonnet 55 (p. 352), "O Mistress Mine" (p. 376), and "The Seven Ages of Man" (p. 391). You may try other combinations or simply let a play stand alone.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

The aims of this unit are for the student:

- To demonstrate understanding of comic, tragic, and satirical elements in drama
- To demonstrate ability to understand and analyze significant details of plot development in plays
- To analyze character portrayal and development in plays
- To identify and interpret the themes of plays
- To interpret relationships between characters and between events in plays
- To demonstrate understanding of the elements of dramatic structure: exposition, rising action, turning point or crisis, falling action, resolution, and climax
- To identify and explain devices of plot development, such as foreshadowing, irony, and suspense
- To identify and explain examples of farce, pun, and comic relief as means of creating humor
- To demonstrate recognition of blank verse, heroic couplet, and imagery
- To identify conventions of dramatic structure, including monologue, soliloquy, and aside
- To predict outcomes in plays
- To draw inferences about characters' motivations, meanings of lines, and themes
- To expand vocabulary by identifying and explaining the meanings of loaded words, puns, allusions, archaic and obsolete words
- To write compositions about aspects of drama, such as characterization, plot structure, language, and meaning

### CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The following concepts and skills are treated in this unit:



SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
Close Reading of a Play 405			
<i>A Marriage Proposal</i> Anton Chekhov 413	Farce 421 Exaggeration 422	Determining Precise Meaning 422	Writing a Character Sketch 422
<i>Visit to a Small Planet</i> Gore Vidal 423	Satire 447	Finding Meanings of Modifiers 434 Using Combining Forms 446	Analyzing Satirical Elements 447
<i>Thunder on Sycamore Street</i> Reginald Rose 449	Exposition 476	Emotionally Loaded Language 477	Analyzing a Play's Theme 477
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i> William Shakespeare 482	Structure 506 Juxtaposition for Contrast 506 Foil 506 Personification 507 Conventions 528 Blank Verse 528 Heroic Couplet 528 Soliloquy 528 Monologue 528 Aside 528 Plot 554 Rising Action 554 Exposition 554 Turning Point, Crisis 555 Falling Action 555 Resolution 555 Climax 555 Dramatic Irony 570 Pun 586 Irony 586	Recognizing Classical Allusions 555 Noting Obsolete and Archaic Meanings 570 Understanding Puns 586	Analyzing Dramatic Technique 507 Discussing Contrasts in Character 528 Discussing Shakespeare's Presentation of Young Characters 555 Paraphrasing a Passage 570 Noting Shakespeare's Use of Irony 586
<i>Developing Skills in Critical Thinking</i> 587	Interpreting a Dramatic Speech 587		
<i>Practice in Reading and Writing</i> 588			Responding to an Interpretation 588

## Close Reading of a Play

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Analysis 411  
Guidelines for Reading a Play 412

## Literary Elements and Reading Skills

Farce 421  
Exaggeration 422  
Satire 447  
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Juxtaposition for Contrast 506  
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Soliloquy 528  
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Aside 528  
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Falling Action 555  
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Pun 586  
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## Language and Vocabulary Skills

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Using Combining Forms 446  
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Recognizing Classical Allusions 555  
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Understanding Puns 586

## Writing About Literature

- Writing a Character Sketch 422
- Analyzing Satirical Elements 447
- Analyzing a Play's Theme 477
- Analyzing Dramatic Technique 507
- Discussing Contrasts in Character 528
- Discussing Shakespeare's Presentation of Young Characters 555
- Paraphrasing a Passage 570
- Noting Shakespeare's Use of Irony 586

## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

- Interpreting a Dramatic Speech 587

## Practice in Reading and Writing

- Responding to an Interpretation 588

## INTRODUCING THE UNIT

What are the attitudes of your students toward drama? Do they like plays? If they were given a choice of reading a novel or a play of the same length, which would they choose? If they had a similar choice, to see a movie or a play, which would they choose?

Many ninth-grade students have been brought up on drama and spend a great deal of time watching television and movies. In the discussion opening the drama unit, you will want to encourage their comments on favorite actors and actresses, situation comedies (not too different from *A Marriage Proposal*), science-fiction shows (with themes like that of *Visit to a Small Planet*), social dramas (as significant as *Thunder on Sycamore Street*), and romantic dramas (none better than *Romeo and Juliet*). Suggest that their future enjoyment can be even keener if they learn the new skills and insights available in this drama unit.

You may find that many of your students have not seen plays performed either "live" or in recorded productions. These students especially would benefit from viewing a movie of one of the versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, for example. If access to film or videocassette can be arranged, such an activity might be planned to come after study of the play has been completed. Students will be able to understand more about the play and its staging or filming if they have been thoroughly prepared by study.

Although movie versions of plays often fall short of what we imagine while reading or what we feel at seeing a live performance, they still involve us in a valuable imaginative experience. Students seeing a movie of a play that they have read will be stimulated to think about the differences between live and filmed drama and about some of the important decisions that those who stage drama must make—because of their medium.

For instance, in live drama, the director must decide the importance of stage setting in the production. Will there be a detailed, realistic setting with many properties, or will the setting be minimal, with the actors suggesting the setting or properties by gestures and words? Do the words of the play describe the setting so that the viewer can imagine it? Or should description be added? Many other decisions must be made—including whether the entire play will be presented or whether some parts will be cut to improve dramatic impact for the audience.

When a play is filmed, the filming inevitably has an impact upon the way the play is performed. The close-up lens, for example, brings the audience much closer to the performance. Broad movements and gestures necessary for stage productions must be abandoned in favor of a more understated acting style. The slightest change in facial expression comes across on the big screen much more intimately than in the spaciousness of a large theater.

Another way to increase student awareness of drama as an art form is to point out the artificial conventions that have developed over the years and that are now readily accepted by audiences. An indispensable element of drama is the interpretation, by an actor, of a character in the play. The actor interprets a character's personality and attempts to convey it to the audience. The audience's acceptance of the actor as the character he or she is portraying depends upon the actor's skill.

The audience, too, must participate by suspending their disbelief, allowing themselves to accept the actors as the characters for the length of the play. When they go to see *Romeo and Juliet*, for instance, they accept various actors as Romeo, Juliet, Mercutio, Tybalt, and other characters. They also agree to believe that the date is no longer in the latter part of the twentieth century but is July of several hundred years ago; that the setting of the play (perhaps New York or Dallas or Peoria or Irvine, in reality) is Verona, Italy; that these Italians spoke Elizabethan English and dressed in whatever fashion they are dressed for the play; that all houses, orchards, and tombs in the play have transparent walls for the audience to see through; and that the night is never so dark that one cannot see the characters. The list of conventions is endless, but these should be enough to suggest to students the artificiality of the form. This artificiality is not bad, nor is it confined to drama. Poetry, novels, and short stories usually follow certain accepted conventions as well.

Another interesting aspect of drama is the relationship between playwriting and stage facilities. Just as the play director must adapt a play to fit the facilities and actors available to him, so also must the author adapt what he writes to the stage facilities that are or will probably be available to him. The author writes within a certain set of expectations, and those expectations influence what he writes. For example, Shakespeare's plays are often praised for their descriptive passages. One famous description in *Romeo and Juliet* is that beginning "The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night . . ." (Act Two, Scene 3). It does not diminish Shakespeare's art to point out that he might not have written those words if he had been writing in the twentieth century. Shakespeare's stage did not have an elaborate light system to produce the illusion of dawn or dusk, so Shakespeare had to write the time of day into his characters' lines. Likewise, the Elizabethan stage had few properties (props) and little or no stage scenery, so authors wrote descriptions of locations into plays. Thus, the "deficiencies" of the Elizabethan stage led to enrichment of the drama produced for it. You might want to ask the students to look at *Visit to a Small Planet* and *Thunder on Sycamore Street* for evidence of how these plays (both written for television) were influenced by their "stage."

Students would also benefit from firsthand discussion of drama by one who deals with it professionally. Perhaps your school has a

drama teacher with whom you could trade some time. Or perhaps you can invite someone from a local theater group to speak to your class. Although a director or producer may have the broadest perspective on play production, experienced actors may also contribute valuable insights. If one of your students has acted in plays, he or she may be willing to talk about the experience.

**FOR REINFORCEMENT / EVALUATION**

The **Closure** feature in this unit provides suggestions for reinforcing and concluding classroom instruction on individual selections. A **Study Guide** and a test for each selection in the unit are available in the *Teacher’s Literature Companion*.

**SUGGESTED TEACHING SCHEDULE**

No time schedule can be prescribed for all situations. However, this unit, if all selections are studied, should probably be allotted nearly

four weeks of class time. Estimates for the four plays and related exercises are as follows: *A Marriage Proposal*, one or two days; *Visit to a Small Planet*, three or four days; *Thunder on Sycamore Street*, two days; *Romeo and Juliet*, nine or ten days. You may need one day for introducing the unit and one day for evaluation. Total for the unit, seventeen or more days. More time would be needed to carry out major projects such as play productions and longer compositions.

**USING THE FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS**

This unit contains all Pupil’s Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. The top margins contain teaching strategies to be used for in-class reference and for planning lessons. The side-margins offer information related directly to the text that appears on the reduced pages. These side-margin annotations are designed primarily to be used after students have read the selections and can therefore serve as in-class lecture notes.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Raised in New York not far from the Hudson River, Edward Hopper developed a love of the water, and many of his paintings include a body of water. At one point, he considered becoming a naval architect, and he maintained a lifelong interest in sailing.

Much of his work concentrates on architectural vistas and is often devoid of human inhabitants, even where the viewer would expect them to be included. However, it was not until 1940 that critics described his work as conveying a sense of loneliness. This new perception may reflect society's increasing concern with psychoanalytic interpretations and with urban isolation.

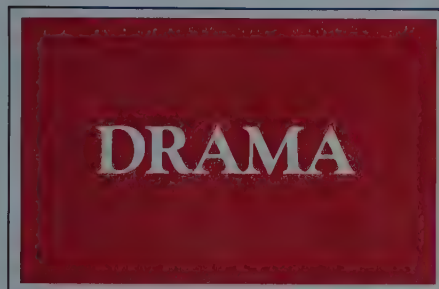
### About the Artwork

*Two on the Aisle* is a good example of Hopper's use of isolated human figures in a context where many people are normally present. The man appears to be speaking, but not to either of the two others in the picture. The three apparently have a common purpose—to see a theatrical production—yet remain isolated. Only the curved lines of the architectural elements in the painting unite them.

### Ideas for Writing

Drama without an audience is unthinkable. Each viewer of a play brings to the production his or her unique imagination and background. Ask students to select one of the figures in the painting and, imagining that they know this person, write a paragraph about the attitudes and assumptions he or she brings to the drama.





## DRAMA

Plays written for stage and television, ranging from romantic Shakespearean tragedy to satirical science fiction, are the focus of this unit. The selections vary in **mood** from lighthearted farces to serious social commentary.

While reading the plays, students will examine several aspects of drama, including stage directions, sound effects, **monologues**, **asides**, and dialogue, to gain insight into the plays. Throughout the unit students will answer questions related to analysis and interpretation of **plot**. The **Literary Elements** feature in this unit helps students analyze elements of **farce**, **satire**, **conventions**, and **exposition** in drama. Students will also analyze the dramatist's use of **irony**, **foils**, and **personification**. The **Language and Vocabulary** feature will give students practice in determining the precise meaning of verbs, recognizing and understanding classical **allusions**, and defining obsolete and archaic words.

*Two on the Aisle* (1927) by Edward Hopper (1882–1967). Oil on canvas.  
The Toledo Museum of Art

## UNIT INTRODUCTION

**1** Tragedy involves a serious moral struggle by the major character (*protagonist*), who is doomed by overwhelming circumstances or fate.

**2** European and English drama is also connected with religion, having evolved from church rituals.

**3** Comedy now refers to any story with happy ending. If Shakespeare had allowed Friar Laurence's plan to work, *Romeo and Juliet* would be a comedy.

Drama, like poetry, is a very old literary genre that developed long before the novel and short story. The oldest dramas that have survived in Western literature—those of the Greek playwrights Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides—were composed and performed twenty-five hundred years ago. Some people believe these early plays have never been surpassed.

**1** The two major forms of drama are tragedy and comedy. The word *tragedy* comes from a Greek word meaning “goat song.” No one knows what the association with goat means, but it is generally agreed that the drama had some connection with religious rituals. Perhaps a goat was sacrificed to one of the gods, or perhaps the actors wore goat-skins. The word *comedy* also comes from the Greek. Roughly translated, it means “a singer in the revels,” indicating that it was associated with a joyous festival of some kind.

**2** Within each major type of drama there are subtypes, each with its own traditions. It is possible to distinguish different kinds of tragedy: Greek classical tragedy, Shakespearean tragedy, domestic tragedy, heroic tragedy, and the like. *Romeo and Juliet* (page 482) is a Shakespearean tragedy. Comedy, likewise, may be subdivided into categories: romantic comedy, comedy of humors, comedy of manners, for example. *A Marriage Proposal* by Anton Chekhov (chĕk'ôf') (page 413) is a type of comedy known as *farce*, which depends on improbable situations and exaggerated characters.

**3** In earlier times, plays were written almost exclusively for performance in a theater—whether that theater was outdoors or indoors. In our own time we have had plays developed for different media. *Visit to a Small Planet* by Gore Vidal (page 423) and *Thunder on Sycamore Street* by Reginald Rose (page 449) were both written for television. In reading these plays you will find special sets of directions governing the position of the television cameras.

Many of the elements that you have already studied in connection with short stories are relevant to the study of drama. Throughout this unit you will have opportunity to examine the dramatist's art.



## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to list characteristics that they believe contribute to the success of a play, a movie, or a television program.

## PRESENTATION

In this section, students are given an opportunity to refine their close reading skills as they read Wilder's *Mozart and the Gray Steward*.

Ask students to read *Mozart and the Gray Steward*, ignoring all side notes. Then have them

read the play again, this time studying the **Thinking Model** notes. Encourage students to match their own ideas against the comments that appear in the margin before they read the **Analysis**. The **Analysis** brings students back into the play as it develops ideas suggested in the

# CLOSE READING OF A PLAY

## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Drama has its own *conventions*, or traditions, including stage directions, sound effects, soliloquies, monologues, and asides. Generally, however, dialogue is the dramatist's most important device for presenting character and for moving the action along.

The following play, *Mozart and the Gray Steward*, is a "three-minute" play by Thornton Wilder, a major American playwright. Wilder got the idea for his play from an incident in the composer's life. Shortly before his death, Mozart was visited by a stranger, who commissioned him to compose a requiem. Read the play several times, and aloud at least once. Use the sidenotes to guide your study of the play. Then turn to the analysis on page 411.

## Mozart and the Gray Steward

THORNTON WILDER

**3** *Mozart is seated at a table in a mean room in Vienna orchestrating The Magic Flute.<sup>1</sup> Leaves of ruled paper are strewn about the floor. His wife enters in great excitement.*

**Constanze.** There's someone come to see you, someone important. Pray God, it's a commission from Court.

**4** *Mozart (unmoved).* Not while Salieri's<sup>2</sup> alive.

**Constanze.** Put on your slippers, dear. It's someone dressed all in gray, with a gray

### Thinking Model

*Financial hardship revealed by shabbiness and disorder.*

*Mozart is dependent on commissions.*

## CLOSE READING OF A PLAY

**1** In a short story or novel, for example, an omniscient narrator can rather easily use **exposition** to reveal a character's thoughts and feelings. In a play, dialogue must be used to reveal the inner workings of a character's mind.

**2** Reading the drama aloud serves as a reminder that, unlike dialogue in novels and short stories, which are usually meant to be read silently, dialogue in a play is meant to be spoken.

**3** **Setting.** Shabbiness and disorder of room contrast with beauty and order of the opera he is creating.

**4** Mozart's reply tells us his frame of mind: he is cynical, apparently because his rival is more successful despite inferior musical abilities.

1. *The Magic Flute*: an opera completed in 1791, the year of the composer's death.

2. **Salieri**: Antonio Salieri (1750–1825), an Italian composer who became prominent in Viennese musical life. He was the supposed enemy of Mozart.

**Thinking Model.** As students read the analysis, it is important to emphasize that this examination represents one reader's interpretation. Students should be encouraged to offer their own conclusions and to support their assertions with evidence from the play.

Or you might choose to read *Mozart and the Gray Steward* aloud, stopping to ask questions that will help students identify and analyze the elements of the selection. For example, you might ask students what they learn of Mozart's personal affairs in the opening dialogue between

him and his wife. (Mozart and his wife are very poor. They are living in a shabby place, "a mean room," and Constanze says they "must have some money." Mozart is physically ill. He wishes to be left alone so that he can work.)

**5**  
**Repetition.** Repetition of phrase emphasizes Mozart's bitterness.

**6**  
The way Constanze speaks to Mozart suggests that he is proud and stubborn and that his stubbornness hinders his financial success.

**7**  
This list of reasons why he does not want to see visitor, followed by his giving in without a pause, is ironically humorous.

mask over his eyes, and he's come in a great coach with its coat of arms all covered up with gray cloth. Pray God, it's a commission from Court for a *Te Deum*<sup>3</sup> or something. (*She tidies up the room in six gestures.*)

**5** **Mozart.** Not while Salieri's alive.

**6** **Constanze.** But, now, do be nice, 'Gangl,<sup>4</sup> please. We must have some money, my treasure. Just listen to him and say "yes" and "thank you" and then you and I'll talk it over after he's gone. (*She holds his coat.*) Come, put this on. Step into your slippers.

**7** **Mozart** (*sighing*). I'm not well. I'm at home. I'm at work. There's not a single visitor in the whole world that could interest me. Bring him in.

[*She hurries out and presently reenters preceding the visitor. The visitor is dressed from head to foot in gray silk. His bright eyes look out through the holes in a narrow gray silk mask. He holds to his nose a gray perfumed handkerchief. One would say: an elegant undertaker.*]

**The Gray Steward.** Kapellmeister<sup>5</sup> Mozart, *servus*.<sup>6</sup> Gracious lady, *servus*.

**Mozart.** *Servus*.

**The Gray Steward.** Revered and noble master, wherever music reigns, wherever genius is valued, the name of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is . . .

**Mozart.** Sir, I have always been confused by compliments and beg you to spare me that mortification by proceeding at once to the cause of your visit . . . the . . . the honor of your visit.

*The visitor wishes to conceal his identity.*

*A hint that Mozart is not adept at court intrigue.*

*Desperate financial situation is confirmed.*

*Mozart gives in, reluctantly.*

*Visitor is elegantly dressed.*

*He has an air of affectation.*

*Elegant manners and excessive compliments offend Mozart, who impatiently interrupts him.*

3. *Te Deum* (tē'dā'əm, tē'dē'əm): a Latin hymn. The opening words are *Te Deum Laudamus*, meaning "We praise Thee, O God."

4. 'Gangl (gän'gəl): a shortened form of Wolfgang, Mozart's given name.

5. **Kapellmeister** (kā-pēl'mis'tər): German for "choir master."

6. *servus* (sūr'vūs): Latin for "your servant."

**The Gray Steward.** Revered master, before I lay my business before you, may I receive your promise that—whether you accept my commission or not—you both will . . .

8 **Mozart.** I promise you our secrecy, unless our silence would prove dishonorable to me or injurious to someone else. Pray continue.

9 **The Gray Steward.** Know then, gracious and revered genius, that I come from a prince who combines all the qualities of birth, station, generosity, and wisdom.

10 **Mozart.** Ha! a European secret.

**The Gray Steward.** His Excellency moreover has just sustained a bitter misfortune. He has lately lost his wife and consort, a lady who was the admiration of her court and the sole light of her bereaved husband's life. Therefore, his Excellency, my master, commissions you to compose a Requiem Mass in honor of his lady. He asks you to pour into it the height of your invention and that wealth of melody and harmony that have made you the glory of our era. And for this music he asks leave to pay you the sum of four hundred crowns—two hundred now, and the second two hundred crowns when you deliver the first four numbers.

**Mozart.** Well, Constanze, I must not be proud.

11 **The Gray Steward.** There is but one proviso.<sup>7</sup>

**Mozart.** Yes, I heard it. The work must represent the height of my invention.

**The Gray Steward.** That was an easy assumption, master. The proviso is this: You shall let his Excellency have this music as an anonymous work, and you shall never by any sign, by so much as the nod of your head, acknowledge that the work is yours.

12 **Mozart.** And his Excellency is not aware that the pages I may compose at the height of my

7. **proviso** (prə-vī'zō): condition.

*Mozart scoffs at supposed virtues.*

*Patron wishes to pass the work off as his own.*

8

Mozart's answer suggests that he is accustomed to dealing with people who are less than forthright.

9

Phrases of courtly flattery, such as these, were frequently satirized even in Mozart's time.

10

Mozart's sarcastic reply does not prevent courtier from continuing speech.

11

Mozart is asked to use "height of . . . invention" to compose Requiem Mass that patron will then pretend to have written. Degree of flattery is matched by baseness of the proposal from "his Excellency."

12

*What is the significance of Mozart's ironic repetition of "at the height of my invention"? Reveals his awareness that he is unmatched among contemporary composers.*



13

*Why does Mozart accept the commission?* Because of financial necessity.

14

*Irony.* Aware that he is dying, Mozart bitterly resents having to write what was to be his Requiem Mass to honor woman he considers contemptible; he resents selling his talents for so little to one so dishonest and rich.

15

Reply suggests that Mozart is not convinced that Heaven was behind the offer.

13

invention may be their own sufficient signature?

**The Gray Steward.** That may be. Naturally my master will see to it that no other composer will ever be able to claim the work as his.

**Mozart.** Quick, give me your paper and I will sign it. Leave your two hundred crowns with my wife at the foot of the stairs. Come back in August and you will have the first four numbers. *Servus. Servus.*

**The Gray Steward** (*backing out*). *Servus, master. Servus, madame.*

[*Constanze returns in a moment and looks anxiously towards her husband.*]

**Constanze.** A visit from Heaven, 'Gangl. Now you can go into the country. Now you can drink all the Bohemian water in the world.

14

**Mozart** (*bitterly*). Good. And just at a time when I was contemplating a Requiem Mass. But for *myself*. However, I must not be proud.

**Constanze** (*trying to divert him*). Who can these people be? Try and think.

**Mozart.** Oh, there's no mystery about that. It's the Count von Walsegg. He composes himself. But for the most part he buys string quartets from us; he erases the signatures and has them played in his castle. The courtiers flatter him and pretend that they have guessed him to be the composer. He does not deny it. He tries to appear confused. And now he has succeeded in composing a Requiem. But that will reduce my pride.

**Constanze.** You know he will only be laughed at. The music will speak for itself. Heaven wanted to give us four hundred crowns—

15

**Mozart.** And Heaven went about it humorously.

*Mozart accepts the commission brusquely.*

*Mozart guesses the identity of his patron from his dishonorable actions.*

*Note the irony.*

16 **Constanze.** What was his wife like?  
**Mozart.** Her impudences smelt to Heaven. She dressed like a page and called herself Cherubin.<sup>8</sup> Her red cheeks and her black teeth and her sixty years are in my mind now.

**Constanze** (*after a pause*). We'll give back the money. You can write the music, without writing it for them.

17 **Mozart.** No, I like this game. I like it for its very falseness. What does it matter who signs such music or to whom it is addressed? (*He flings himself upon the sofa and turns his face to the wall.*) For whom do we write music? for musicians? Salieri!—for patrons? Von Walsegg!—for the public? The Countess von Walsegg! I shall write this Requiem, but it shall be for myself, since I am dying.

**Constanze.** My beloved, don't talk so! Go to sleep. (*She spreads a shawl over his body.*) How can you say such things? Imagine even thinking such a thing! You will live many years and write countless beautiful pages. We will return the money and refuse the commission. Then the matter will be closed. Now go to sleep, my treasure.

[*She goes out, quietly closing the door behind her. Mozart, at the mercy of his youth, his illness, and his genius, is shaken by a violent fit of weeping. The sobs gradually subside and he falls asleep. In his dream The Gray Steward returns.*]

**The Gray Steward.** Mozart! Turn and look at me. You know who I am.

18 **Mozart** (*not turning*). You are the steward of the Count von Walsegg. Go tell him to write his own music. I will not stain my pen to celebrate his lady, so let the foul bury the foul.

**The Gray Steward.** Lie then against the

8. **Cherubin** (kā-rōō-bēn'): presumably after Cherubino, a character in Mozart's opera *The Marriage of Figaro*.

*Mozart's disappointments are expressed in this question.*

16 As Mozart remembers her, she was undignified, trying to appear young and attractive even though she was old and unattractive.

17 This event has given Mozart reason to think about the purpose for writing music. His question will be answered in his dream.

18 In his dream, Mozart's hurt pride asserts itself.

19

Steward reminds Mozart that he cannot write this Requiem just for himself, but for all those without names, those who have died unremembered.

20

*Field:* burial ground.

21

**Theme.** Mozart must set aside his pride before he can enter the kingdom of art.

wall, and learn that it is Death itself that commissions. . . .

**Mozart.** Death is not so fastidious. Death carries no perfumed handkerchief.

**The Gray Steward.** Lie then against the wall. Know first that all the combinations of circumstance can suffer two interpretations, the apparent and the real.

**Mozart.** Then speak, sycophant;<sup>9</sup> I know the apparent one. What other reading can this humiliation bear?

19

**The Gray Steward.** It is Death itself that commands you this Requiem. You are to give a voice to all those millions sleeping, who have no one but you to speak for them. There lie the captains and the thieves, the queens and the drudges, while the evening of their earthly remembrance shuts in, and from that great field rises an eternal *miserere nobis*.<sup>10</sup> Only through the intercession<sup>11</sup> of great love can that despairing cry be eased. Was that not sufficient cause for this commission to be anonymous?

20

**Mozart** (*drops trembling on one knee beside the couch*). Forgive me.

**The Gray Steward.** And it was for this that the pretext and mover was chosen from among the weakest and vainest of humans. Death has her now, and all her folly has passed into the dignity and grandeur of her state. Where is your pride now? Here are her slippers and her trinkets. Press them against your lips. Again! Again! Know henceforth that only he who has kissed the leper<sup>12</sup> can enter the kingdom of art.

21

*In his dream, the patron has become Death.*

*The steward answers Mozart's question—for whom he will write his Requiem.*

9. **sycophant** (sīk'ə-fənt): a servile flatterer.

10. **miserere nobis** (mīz'ə-rār'ē nō'bīs): Latin for "Have mercy upon us."

11. **intercession** (īn'tər-sēs'hən): mediation; interceding on behalf of others.

12. **he . . . leper**: This may be an allusion to a story about Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226). In order to do God's will, he overcame his repugnance for lepers and forced himself to greet a leper with the kiss of peace.



22

**Mozart.** I have sinned, yet grant me one thing. Grant that I may live to finish the Requiem.

**The Gray Steward.** No! No!

*[And it remains unfinished.]*

## Analysis

Wilder's play is more than dramatized biography. It gives us insight into the way the arts were supported in eighteenth-century Europe. Artists of Mozart's stature were at the mercy of wealthy patrons or the Court, and could not afford the luxury of pride.

23

Wilder quickly establishes the situation in Mozart's household. It is the last year of Mozart's life. Despite his reputation as a musical genius, Mozart and his wife are living shabbily, in desperate financial straits. The two references to Salieri's influence suggest that Mozart is not adept at court intrigue. Constanze's anxiety for him to be civil to the visitor indicates that he has a rebellious temperament; he is not in the habit of being courteous or tactful.

24

The visitor, the steward of a great and wealthy household, appears masked in order to conceal his identity. Despite his elegant costume, there is something sinister about his appearance; he is described as an "elegant undertaker." His manners and excessive compliments offend Mozart, who interrupts him impatiently and scoffs at his inflated praise of his master. There is a discrepancy between the courtly, refined language of the steward and the base proposal he offers Mozart. His patron wishes to commission a Requiem Mass with the proviso that it remain anonymous. Clearly he intends to pass the work off as his own.

Mozart lays aside his pride and accepts the commission. Although he signs away his right to claim the work as his own, he has the ironic satisfaction of knowing that the music he composes will be its own "sufficient signature."

After the steward leaves, Mozart struggles with his pride and his humiliation. He bitterly complains that he must sell the Requiem he was planning for himself to honor the memory of a vain and shameless woman. He reveals the identity and ignoble motives of the patron who purchases musical works in order to pretend that he is their composer. "For whom do we write music?" he asks, and with contempt notes his rival, Salieri; his patron, a dishonorable nobleman; his public, a corrupt and foolish woman.

22

**Irony.** Once Mozart understands the importance of Gray Steward's request, his wish for time to complete Requiem is not granted.

23

Artists are frequently portrayed as unconcerned with social form.

24

This discrepancy probably heightens Mozart's bitterness.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify the elements that work together in a play and show how they reinforce one another in *Mozart and the Gray Steward*.

25

This question is central to all arts.

### READING A PLAY

1. The exposition of *Romeo and Juliet* provides essential information about the Montagues and the Capulets in fourteenth-century Verona. Shakespeare presents the **conflict** between the two families before introducing the love story.
2. In *Thunder on Sycamore Street*, Reginald Rose includes stage directions that convey not only what the characters are doing and how the lines are spoken but also what the television cameras are revealing.
3. The famous balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet* creates **suspense**. How will the title characters' love for each other affect the bitter feud between their families?
4. The **mood** of *A Marriage Proposal* is established early in the humorous dialogue between Tschubukov and Lomov.
5. In some literary works, **theme** is expressed directly, but more often theme is implicit, as in *Thunder on Sycamore Street*, which suggests that an individual has the right to be different despite the pressure from others to conform.

25

Worn out by his grief and his illness, Mozart falls asleep. He dreams that the steward returns, this time as an emissary of Death. The steward reveals that the purpose for Mozart's Requiem transcends matters of pride. While the apparent aim is to honor the memory of a vain and weak person, that is a pretext for the true purpose of the Requiem, which is to serve as a prayer for the repose of millions of anonymous souls. In essence, the steward answers Mozart's question, "For whom do we write music?" Great art is not for the individual but for all time.

### Guidelines for Reading a Play

1. *Note any information that establishes the setting and the situation that will start the plot moving.* The opening of the play establishes the time and place of the action as eighteenth-century Vienna. We learn that Mozart and his wife are in desperate need of money and that they are hopeful of receiving a commission from Court.
2. *Note clues that tell you what the players are doing or how the lines are spoken.* Wilder uses stage directions to convey some of this information to you. Other instructions are built into the dialogue. For example, it is clear that Mozart is impatient with the visitor and his flattery. He interrupts the Gray Steward twice, urging him to get down to business. His tone very likely would be abrupt, almost rude.
3. *Anticipate the action that will develop out of each scene.* There are hints in Constanze's speeches that Mozart has been rude to his patrons and too proud to accept their commissions. What might be the outcome of Mozart's accepting a commission that calls for his work to be anonymous?
4. *Be alert to the mood of the play.* The serious nature of the play is immediately evident in the references to financial hardship and in Constanze's concern for a commission from Court. There is a note of foreboding in the costume of the Gray Steward, who is described as "an elegant undertaker."
5. *Attempt a statement of the theme or underlying meaning of the play.* Wilder's play raises questions about the purpose of art and the artist's vocation.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to describe the farcical qualities of **characters** and situations in the play. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 422 gives students practice in distinguishing between words that have similar meanings.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to describe the most outlandish marriage proposal or wedding they have ever known. Tell them they will now read about a most unusual courtship and proposal.

# A Marriage Proposal

**ANTON CHEKHOV**

*People walking down the road to happiness often trip over their own feet. This is the message of A Marriage Proposal, a wild, fast-paced farce set in nineteenth-century Russia. The play is about a landowner who decides to marry the girl next door. What could go wrong? You are about to find out.*

## Characters

Stepan Stepanovitch Tschubukov (stě-păn' stě-pă'nô-vich choō-bōō-kôf'), a country farmer

Natalia Stepanovna (nă-tăl'yə stě-pă'nôv-nə), his daughter, age twenty-five

Ivan Vassiliyitch Lomov (î-văn' vâ-sîl'ê-yîch lô'môf), Tschubukov's neighbor

**1 Scene:** Reception room in Tschubukov's country home, Russia. Tschubukov discovered as the curtain rises. Enter Lomov, wearing a dress suit.

**Tschubukov** (going toward him and greeting him).

**2 Who is this I see? My dear fellow! Ivan Vassiliyitch! I'm so glad to see you! (Shakes hands) But this is a surprise! How are you?**

**Lomov.** Thank you! And how are you?

**Tschubukov.** Oh, so-so, my friend. Please sit down. It isn't right to forget one's neighbor.

**3 But tell me, why all this ceremony? Dress clothes, white gloves and all? Are you on your way to some engagement, my good fellow?**

**Lomov.** No, I have no engagement except with you, Stepan Stepanovitch.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 56 / Selection Test 39 / Reading Check 31 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 47

**Tschubukov.** But why in evening clothes, my friend? This isn't New Year's!

**4 Lomov.** You see, it's simply this, that—(composing himself) I have come to you, Stepan Stepanovitch, to trouble you with a request. It is not the first time I have had the honor of turning to you for assistance, and you have always, that is—I beg your pardon, I am a bit excited! I'll take a drink of water first, dear Stepan Stepanovitch. (He drinks.)

**5 Tschubukov** (aside). He's come to borrow money! I won't give him any! (To Lomov) What is it, then, dear Lomov?

**Lomov.** You see—dear—Stepanovitch, pardon me, Stepan—Stepan—dearvitch—I mean—I am terribly nervous, as you will be so good as to see—! What I mean to say—you are the only one who can help me, though I don't deserve it, and—and I have no right whatever to make this request of you.

**Tschubukov.** Oh, don't beat about the bush, my dear fellow. Tell me!

**Lomov.** Immediately—in a moment. Here it is, then: I have come to ask for the hand of your daughter, Natalia Stepanovna.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes what may "go wrong" as people search for happiness. Here, characters make their own problems. As students read, ask them to see how Chekhov makes the characters' problems funny.

## A Marriage Proposal

After students have read the play, the margin annotations will assist you in helping students understand the farcical qualities of the play.

**1**

**Setting.** This play is set in 1888, in best room of prosperous landowner's house. Furnishings are probably elaborate in late Victorian manner.

**2**

Customary form of address used by Russians in polite conversation: first name, followed by patronym (derived from an ancestor's name).

**3**

Lomov's clothes, quite unusual for time of day, show that visit is not casual.

**4**

**Characterization.** Lomov begins request in formal speech (seemingly memorized) but is so nervous he stops. His agitation and lack of self-control reveal important character traits.

**5**

**What does Tschubukov's aside reveal about his character? He is preoccupied with money. Warm greeting hides wariness.**



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Lomov, a thirty-five-year-old landowner, decides to marry Natalia, the girl next door. When Lomov arrives in evening clothes, Natalia's father, Stepan Tschubukov, fears he wants to borrow money, then rejoices to hear that he has come to

ask for Natalia's hand in marriage.

Lomov, who does not know Natalia well, awkwardly tries to explain to her why he is there. Before he proposes to her, the two begin to quarrel about who owns the meadow between their properties.

## PRESENTATION

A **farce** is a work of drama intended to excite laughter. The farce depends more on exaggerated, unlikely situations and personal characteristics than on **plot** and **character** development.

6

Tschubukov responds with real enthusiasm. Marriage is one he has hoped for and sees as very advantageous.

7

Since Lomov's proposal seems to be accepted, play might seem finished before begun. **Conflict** has not yet been introduced.

8

**Farce.** Audience may assume Lomov's symptoms are more imaginary than real. Hypochondria can be funny as real illness is not.

9

Tschubukov's concern with money surfaces in joke portraying marriage as sale to dealer.

10

**Characterization.** Natalia's concern with bricks and hay tells audience she is practical woman closely involved in management of estate.

11

Lomov doesn't know how to begin. His feeling cold is sign of his extreme nervousness.

12

**What is farcical about Lomov's monologue?** Says he'll be brief, then proceeds to make long-winded speech.

**Tschubukov** (*joyfully*). Angel! Ivan Vassiliyitch! Say that once again! I didn't quite hear it!

**Lomov.** I have the honor to beg—

**Tschubukov** (*interrupting*). My dear, dear man!

I am so happy that everything is so—

6 everything! (*Embraces and kisses him*) I have wanted this to happen for so long. It has been my dearest wish! (*He represses a tear.*) And I have always loved you, my dear fellow, as my own son! May God give you His blessings and His grace and—I always wanted it to happen. But why am I standing here like a blockhead? I am completely dumbfounded with pleasure, completely dumbfounded. My whole being—I'll call Natalia—

**Lomov.** Dear Stepan Stepanovitch, what do you think? May I hope for Natalia Stepanovna's acceptance?

7 **Tschubukov.** Really! A fine boy like you—and you think she won't accept on the minute? Lovesick as a cat and all that—! (*He goes out right.*)

**Lomov.** I'm cold. My whole body is trembling as though I was going to take my examination! But the chief thing is to settle matters! If a person meditates too much, or hesitates, or talks about it, waits for an ideal or for true love, he never gets it. Brr! It's cold! Natalia is an excellent housekeeper, not at all bad-looking, well educated—what more could I ask? I'm so excited my ears are roaring! (*He drinks water.*) And not to marry, that won't do! In the first place, I'm thirty-five—a critical age, you might

8 say. In the second place, I must live a well-regulated life. I have a weak heart, continual palpitation, and I am very sensitive and always getting excited. My lips begin to tremble and the pulse in my right temple throbs terribly. But the worst of all is sleep! I hardly lie down and begin to doze before something in my left side begins to pull and tug, and something begins to hammer in my left shoulder—and in my head, too! I jump up like a madman, walk

about a little, lie down again, but the moment I fall asleep I have a terrible cramp in the side. And so it is all night long!

[*Enter Natalia Stepanovna.*]

9 **Natalia.** Ah! It's you. Papa said to go in: there was a dealer in there who'd come to buy something. Good afternoon, Ivan Vassiliyitch.

**Lomov.** Good day, my dear Natalia Stepanovna.

**Natalia.** You must pardon me for wearing my apron and this old dress: we are working today. Why haven't you come to see us oftener? You've not been here for so long! Sit down. (*They sit down.*) Won't you have something to eat?

**Lomov.** Thank you, I have just had lunch.

**Natalia.** Smoke, do, there are the matches.

10 Today it is beautiful and only yesterday it rained so hard that the workmen couldn't do a stroke of work. How many bricks have you cut? Think of it! I was so anxious that I had the whole field mowed, and now I'm sorry I did it, because I'm afraid the hay will rot. It would have been better if I had waited. But what on earth is this? You are in evening clothes! The latest cut! Are you on your way to a ball? And you seem to be looking better, too—really. Why are you dressed up so gorgeously?

11 **Lomov** (*excited*). You see, my dear Natalia Stepanovna—it's simply this: I have decided to ask you to listen to me—of course it will be a surprise and indeed you'll be angry, but I— (*Aside*) How fearfully cold it is!

**Natalia.** What is it? (*A pause*) Well?

12 **Lomov.** I'll try to be brief. My dear Natalia Stepanovna, as you know, for many years, since my childhood, I have had the honor to know your family. My poor aunt and her husband, from whom, as you know, I inherited the estate, always had the greatest respect for your father and your poor mother. The Lomovs

In *A Marriage Proposal*, the situation is comical. Lomov arrives unexpectedly, all dressed up. Tschubukov, who fears being asked for a loan, is overjoyed to be asked for his daughter instead.

The characters are comical and behave in an

exaggerated fashion. Lomov comes to propose marriage, but he is unable to do so. His interest is in a "well regulated" life, not in Natalia. Hypochondria will probably keep his life poorly regulated. Natalia is interested mostly in getting a husband, regardless of his health. Tschubukov is

motivated by money. He fears Lomov wants to borrow money, then is "dumbfounded with pleasure" that Lomov wants to marry Natalia. Clearly, Lomov is neurotic and unhealthy, but Tschubukov is ready to shoot himself when Lomov leaves.

and the Tschubukovs have been for decades on the friendliest, indeed the closest, terms with each other, and furthermore my property, as you know, adjoins your own. If you will be so good as to remember, my meadows touch your birchwoods.

**Natalia.** Pardon the interruption. You said "my meadows"—but are they yours?

**Lomov.** Yes, they belong to me.

**Natalia.** What nonsense! The meadows belong to us—not to you!

**Lomov.** No, to me! Now, my dear Natalia Stepanovna!

**Natalia.** Well, that is certainly news to me. How do they belong to you?

**Lomov.** How? I am speaking of the meadows lying between your birchwoods and my brick earth.

**14 Natalia.** Yes, exactly. They belong to us.

**Lomov.** No, you are mistaken, my dear Natalia Stepanovna, they belong to me.

**Natalia.** Try to remember exactly, Ivan Vassiliyitch. Is it so long ago that you inherited them?

**Lomov.** Long ago! As far back as I can remember they have always belonged to us.

**Natalia.** But that isn't true! You'll pardon my saying so.

**Lomov.** It is all a matter of record, my dear Natalia Stepanovna. It is true that at one time the title to the meadows was disputed, but now everyone knows they belong to me. There is no room for discussion. Be so good as to listen: my aunt's grandmother put these meadows, free from all costs, into the hands of your father's grandfather's peasants for a certain time while they were making bricks for my grandmother. These people used the meadows free of cost for about forty years, living there as they would on their own property. Later, however, when—

**Natalia.** There's not a word of truth in that! My grandfather, and my great-grandfather,

too, knew that their estate reached back to the swamp, so that the meadows belong to us. What further discussion can there be? I can't understand it. It is really most annoying.

**Lomov.** I'll show you the papers, Natalia Stepanovna.

**Natalia.** No, either you are joking, or trying to lead me into a discussion. That's not at all nice! We have owned this property for nearly three hundred years, and now all at once we hear that it doesn't belong to us. Ivan Vassiliyitch, you will pardon me, but I really can't believe

**15** my ears. So far as I am concerned, the meadows are worth very little. In all they don't contain more than five acres and they are worth only a few hundred rubles,<sup>1</sup> say three hundred, but the injustice of the thing is what affects me. Say what you will, I can't bear injustice.

**Lomov.** Only listen until I have finished, please! The peasants of your respected father's grandfather, as I have already had the honor to tell you, baked bricks for my grandmother. My aunt's grandmother wished to do them a favor—

**16 Natalia.** Grandfather! Grandmother! Aunt! I know nothing about them. All I know is that the meadows belong to us, and that ends the matter.

**Lomov.** No, they belong to me!

**17 Natalia.** And if you keep on explaining it for two days, and put on five suits of evening clothes, the meadows are still ours, ours, ours! I don't want to take your property, but I refuse to give up what belongs to us!

**Lomov.** Natalia Stepanovna, I don't need the meadows, I am only concerned with the principle. If you are agreeable, I beg of you, accept them as a gift from me!

**18 Natalia.** But I can give them to you, because they belong to me! That is very peculiar, Ivan

1. **ruble:** the Russian unit of money.

### 13

**Irony.** Pointing out what they have in common, Lomov mentions disputed meadows, causing argument. Natalia does not know reason for Lomov's visit.

### 14

As argument heats up, audience is aware of its absurdity. If they marry, their properties will be combined. Ownership will not be issue.

### 15

Natalia admits meadows are worth very little, but she is not willing to be bested in an argument.

### 16

**Farce.** Argument degenerates into shouting match; characters scarcely listen to each other.

### 17

Natalia mocks Lomov's evening clothes. Her "ours, ours, ours!" echoes arguments of children.

### 18

**Why does Natalia not accept Lomov's offer?** She would be conceding Lomov owns land.

The title is ironic (Lomov never does propose), as is the ending (Tschubukov says "domestic joys" when he means the opposite). Your students will probably notice some other examples of irony in this play.

Farce often exaggerates the shortcomings of

real human beings. Ask your students what flaws of human character are mocked in this play and what Chekhov may be trying to say about people and society.

A *Marriage Proposal* satirizes the nineteenth-century Russian middle class. The play, a great

success for Chekhov, was acted before the Tsar.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Relating Expression Skills

As evidenced by the photograph, *A Marriage Proposal* need not be expensive to produce. Students might enjoy performing the play for their classmates. Costumes, set, and props may be kept to a minimum.

## 19

Despite present appearances, families have long cooperated. In their culture, marriage between Natalia and Lomov would make excellent sense.

## 20

**Simile.** Natalia claims Lomov has accused her family of being "like thieves"; the claim is itself an unjust accusation.

## 21

Although Lomov and Natalia ordinarily use polite, sophisticated language, their argument here is reduced to a pattern common among young children: "It is . . . it is not."

## 22

**Why does Natalia tell Lomov not to scream?** She is using type of *ad hominem* argument, attacking her opponent rather than the issue.



Scene from a 1912 stage production of *A Marriage Proposal* in New York City.

New York Public Library

**19** Vassiliyitch! Until now we have considered you as a good neighbor and a good friend; only last year we lent you our threshing machine, so that we couldn't thresh until November, and **20** now you treat us like thieves! You offer to give me my own land. Excuse me, but neighbors don't treat each other that way. In my opinion, it's a very low trick—to speak frankly—

**Lomov.** According to you I'm a usurper, then, am I? My dear lady, I have never appropriated other people's property, and I shall permit no one to accuse me of such a thing! (*He goes*

**21** quickly to the bottle and drinks water.) The meadows are mine!

**Natalia.** That's not the truth! They are mine!

**Lomov.** Mine!

**Natalia.** Eh? I'll prove it to you! This afternoon I'll send my reapers into the meadows.

**Lomov.** W-h-a-t?

**Natalia.** My reapers will be there today!

**Lomov.** And I'll chase them off!

**Natalia.** If you dare!

**Lomov.** The meadows are mine, you understand? Miné!

**22** **Natalia.** Really, you needn't scream so! If you want to scream and snort and rage you may do it at home, but here please keep yourself within the limits of common decency.



**23 Lomov.** My dear lady, if it weren't that I were suffering from palpitation of the heart and hammering of the arteries in my temples, I would deal with you very differently! (*In a loud voice*) The meadows belong to me!

**Natalia.** Us!

**Lomov.** Me!

[*Enter Tschubukov, right.*]

**24 Tschubukov.** What's going on here? What is he yelling about?

**Natalia.** Papa, please tell this gentleman to whom the meadows belong, to us or to him?

**25 Tschubukov** (*to Lomov*). My dear fellow, the meadows are ours.

**Lomov.** But, merciful heavens, Stepan Stepanovitch, how do you make that out? You at least might be reasonable. My aunt's grandmother gave the use of the meadows free of cost to your grandfather's peasants; the peasants lived on the land for forty years and used it as their own, but later when—

**26 Tschubukov.** Permit me, my dear friend. You forget that your grandmother's peasants never paid, because there had been a lawsuit over the meadows, and everyone knows that the meadows belong to us. You haven't looked at the map.

**Lomov.** I'll prove to you that they belong to me!

**Tschubukov.** Don't try to prove it, my dear fellow.

**Lomov.** I will!

**Tschubukov.** My good fellow, what are you shrieking about? You can't prove anything by yelling, you know. I don't ask for anything that belongs to you, nor do I intend to give up anything of my own. Why should I? If it has gone so far, my dear man, that you really intend to claim the meadows, I'd rather give them to the peasants than you, and I certainly shall!

**Lomov.** I can't believe it! By what right can you

give away property that doesn't belong to you?

**Tschubukov.** Really, you must allow me to decide what I am to do with my own land! I'm not accustomed, young man, to have people address me in that tone of voice. I, young man, am twice your age, and I beg you to address me respectfully.

**Lomov.** No! No! You think I'm a fool! You're making fun of me! You call my property yours and then expect me to stand quietly by and talk to you like a human being. That isn't the way a good neighbor behaves, Stepan Stepanovitch! You are no neighbor, you're no better than a land-grabber. That's what you are!

**Tschubukov.** Wh—at? What did he say?

**Natalia.** Papa, send the reapers into the meadows this minute!

**Tschubukov** (*to Lomov*). What was that you said, sir?

**Natalia.** The meadows belong to us and I won't give them up! I won't give them up! I won't give them up!

**Lomov.** We'll see about that! I'll prove in court that they belong to me.

**Tschubukov.** In court! You may sue in court, sir, if you like! Oh, I know you, you are only waiting to find an excuse to go to law! You're

**28** an intriguer, that's what you are! Your whole family were always looking for quarrels. The whole lot!

**Lomov.** Kindly refrain from insulting my family. The entire race of Lomov has always been

**29** honorable! And never has one been brought to trial for embezzlement, as your dear uncle was!

**Tschubukov.** And the whole Lomov family were insane!

**Natalia.** Every one of them!

**Tschubukov.** Your grandmother was a dipsomaniac, and the younger aunt, Nastasia Michailovna, ran off with an architect.

**Lomov.** And your mother limped. (*He puts his hand over his heart.*) Oh, my side pains! My temples are bursting! Water!

**23**

Lomov uses his "poor" health to excuse not acting decisively and to appeal for sympathy.

**24**

Tschubukov finds scene very different from what he must have been anticipating.

**25**

Audience knows Tschubukov is unlikely to yield either money or property.

**26**

**Characterization.** Tschubukov appears to be conciliatory (calls Lomov "my dear friend"), but he is soon deeply embroiled in argument.

**27**

**How does Tschubukov address Lomov in this section of dialogue? Why does Tschubukov introduce the matter of age to argument?** He calls Lomov "young man." Apparently, Tschubukov believes that because he's older, he's entitled to unconditional respect.

**28**

Tschubukov opens a new line of argument by insulting Lomov's family. Lomov responds by remembering that Tschubukov's uncle was an embezzler.

**29**

**Farce.** Two sides resort to making wild charges and exposing skeletons from family closets. Some charges are comically minor.

30

In this emotional conflagration, all thoughts of marriage have vanished—as they would in real life. But plot developments in farce are often unexpected.

31

Plot. As Natalia first hears about marriage proposal, her emotions undergo abrupt reversal.

32

Like Lomov, Natalia reacts physically to her emotions. Exaggerated reactions are characteristic of farce.

33

Reversal of Natalia's feeling toward Lomov hints at something left unsaid: Natalia is not very marriageable.

34

Tschubukov and Natalia, equally involved in quarrel, now comically blame each other.

35

Should Tschubukov's suicide threat be taken seriously? No. In farce, such things are to be expected.

36

Plot. To prevent rekindling quarrel about meadows, Natalia steers talk to seemingly harmless topic.

**Tschubukov.** And your dear father was a gambler—and a glutton!

**Natalia.** And your aunt was a gossip like few others!

**Lomov.** And you are an intriguer. Oh, my heart! And it's an open secret that you cheated at the elections—my eyes are blurred! Where is my hat?

**Natalia.** Oh, how low! Liar! Disgusting thing!

**Lomov.** Where's the hat—? My heart! Where shall I go? Where is the door—? Oh—it seems—as though I were dying! I can't—my legs won't hold me—(*Goes to the door*)

30 **Tschubukov** (*following him*). May you never darken my door again!

**Natalia.** Bring your suit to court! We'll see!

[*Lomov staggers out, center*]

**Tschubukov** (*angrily*). The devil!

**Natalia.** Such a good-for-nothing! And then they talk about being good neighbors!

**Tschubukov.** Loafer! Scarecrow! Monster!

**Natalia.** A swindler like that takes over a piece of property that doesn't belong to him and then dares to argue about it!

**Tschubukov.** And to think that this fool dares to make a proposal of marriage!

31 **Natalia.** What? A proposal of marriage?

**Tschubukov.** Why, yes! He came here to make you a proposal of marriage.

**Natalia.** Why didn't you tell me that before?

**Tschubukov.** That's why he had on his evening clothes! The poor fool!

**Natalia.** Proposal for me? Oh! (*Falls into an armchair and groans*) Bring him back! Bring him back!

**Tschubukov.** Bring whom back?

32 **Natalia.** Faster, faster, I'm sinking! Bring him back! (*She becomes hysterical.*)

**Tschubukov.** What is it? What's wrong with you (*His hands to his head*) I'm cursed with bad luck! I'll shoot myself! I'll hang myself!

**Natalia.** I'm dying! Bring him back!

**Tschubukov.** Bah! In a minute! Don't bawl! (*He rushes out, center.*)

33 **Natalia** (*groaning*). What have they done to me? Bring him back! Bring him back!

**Tschubukov** (*comes running in*). He's coming at once! The devil take him! Ugh! Talk to him yourself, I can't.

**Natalia** (*groaning*). Bring him back!

**Tschubukov.** He's coming, I tell you! What a task it is to be the father of a grown daughter! I'll cut my throat! I really will cut my throat!

34 We've argued with the fellow, insulted him, and now we've thrown him out!—and you did it all, you!

**Natalia.** No, you! You haven't any manners, you are brutal! If it weren't for you, he wouldn't have gone!

35 **Tschubukov.** Oh, yes, I'm to blame! If I shoot or hang myself, remember you'll be to blame. You forced me to it! You! (*Lomov appears in the doorway.*) There, talk to him yourself! (*He goes out.*)

**Lomov.** Terrible palpitation!—My leg is lamed! My side hurts me—

**Natalia.** Pardon us, we were angry, Ivan Vassiliyitch. I remember now—the meadows really belong to you.

**Lomov.** My heart is beating terribly! My meadows—my eyelids tremble—(*They sit down.*) We were wrong. It was only the principle of the thing—the property isn't worth much to me, but the principle is worth a great deal.

**Natalia.** Exactly, the principle! Let us talk about something else.

**Lomov.** Because I have proofs that my aunt's grandmother had, with the peasants of your good father—

**Natalia.** Enough enough. (*Aside*) I don't know how to begin. (*To Lomov*) Are you going hunting soon?

**Lomov.** Yes, heath-cock shooting, respected

Natalia Stepanovna. I expect to begin after the harvest. Oh, did you hear? My dog, Ugadi,<sup>2</sup> you know him—limps!

**Natalia.** What a shame! How did that happen?

**Lomov.** I don't know. Perhaps it's a dislocation, or maybe he was bitten by some other dog. (*He sighs.*) The best dog I ever had—to say nothing of his price! I paid Mironov a hundred and twenty-five rubles for him.

**Natalia.** That was too much to pay, Ivan Vassiliyitch.

**Lomov.** In my opinion it was very cheap. A wonderful dog!

**Natalia.** Papa paid eighty-five rubles for his Otkatai<sup>3</sup>, and Otkatai is much better than your Ugadi.

**Lomov.** Really? Otkatai is better than Ugadi? What an idea! (*He laughs.*) Otkatai better than Ugadi!

**Natalia.** Of course he is better. It is true Otkatai is still young; he isn't full-grown yet, but in the pack or on the leash with two or three, there is no better than he, even—

**Lomov.** I really beg your pardon, Natalia Stepanovna, but you quite overlooked the fact that he has a short lower jaw, and a dog with a short lower jaw can't snap.

**37 Natalia.** Short lower jaw? That's the first time I ever heard that!

**Lomov.** I assure you, his lower jaw is shorter than the upper.

**Natalia.** Have you measured it?

**Lomov.** I have measured it. He is good at running, though.

**Natalia.** In the first place, our Otkatai is a purebred, a full-blooded son of Sapragavas

**38 and Stameskis,<sup>4</sup>** and as for your mongrel, nobody could ever figure out his pedigree; he's

old and ugly, and as skinny as an old hag.

**Lomov.** Old, certainly! I wouldn't take five of your Otkatais for him! Ugadi is a dog and Otkatai is—it is laughable to argue about it! Dogs like your Otkatai can be found by the dozens at any dog dealer's, a whole poundful!

**Natalia.** Ivan Vassiliyitch, you are very contrary today. First our meadows belong to you **39** and then Ugadi is better than Otkatai. I don't like it when a person doesn't say what he really thinks. You know perfectly well that Otkatai is a hundred times better than your silly Ugadi. What makes you keep on saying he isn't?

**Lomov.** I can see, Natalia Stepanovna, that you consider me either a blindman or a fool. But at least you may as well admit that Otkatai has a short lower jaw!

**Natalia.** It isn't so!

**Lomov.** Yes, a short lower jaw!

**Natalia** (*loudly*). It's not so!

**Lomov.** What makes you scream, my dear lady?

**Natalia.** What makes you talk such nonsense? It's disgusting! It is high time that Ugadi was shot, and yet you compare him with Otkatai!

**Lomov.** Pardon me, but I can't carry on this argument any longer. I have palpitation of the heart!

**40 Natalia.** I have always noticed that the hunters who do the most talking know the least about hunting.

**41 Lomov.** My dear lady, I beg of you to be still. My heart is bursting! (*He shouts.*) Be still!

**Natalia.** I won't be still until you admit that Otkatai is better!

[*Enter Tschubukov.*]

**42 Tschubukov.** Well, has it begun again?

**Natalia.** Papa, say frankly, on your honor, which dog is better: Otkatai or Ugadi?

**Lomov.** Stepan Stepanovitch, I beg of you, just

**37**

**Farce.** Natalia reacts sharply to Lomov's criticism of her father's dog. Much of the comedy results not from lines themselves but from characters' reactions to lines.

**38**

Natalia's dialogue shifts from argumentative to insulting as she antagonizes Lomov.

**39**

**Characterization.** Natalia accuses Lomov of hypocrisy. She is so sure she is right that she cannot believe anyone could differ in good faith.

**40**

**What is Natalia implying with this statement?** By insulting Lomov's skill at hunting (a traditionally male pursuit), she is impugning his manhood.

**41**

As usual, Lomov uses his "illness" to escape from conflict he cannot win.

**42**

Audience will sense that pattern of earlier quarrel is to be repeated.

2. **Ugadi** (ōō-gā-dī').

3. **Otkatai** (āt-kā-ī').

4. **Sapragavas** (sā-prā-gā'vas); **Stameskis** (stā-mēs'kīs).



43

Tschubukov enters into discussion in apparently reasonable fashion, as in previous quarrel. Audience may be sure he will not stay calm.

44

Lomov seems to know something that would shame Tschubukov.

45

Not at all sympathetic, Natalia again mocks Lomov for his unmanliness.

46

The hunt is social event. Tschubukov admits flattering Count but seems embarrassed by accusation.

47

*Why does Tschubukov call Lomov a "walking drugstore"?* He is referring to Lomov's hypochondria.

48

*Plot.* Lomov's fainting creates important reversal. Natalia thinks she has lost a husband.

answer this: has your dog a short lower jaw or not? Yes or no?

**Tschubukov.** And what if he has? Is it of such importance? There is no better dog in the whole country.

**Lomov.** My Ugadi is better. Tell the truth, now!

43 **Tschubukov.** Don't get so excited, my dear fellow! Permit me. Your Ugadi certainly has his good points. He is from a good breed, has a good stride, strong haunches, and so forth. But the dog, if you really want to know it, has two faults; he is old and he has a short lower jaw.

**Lomov.** Pardon me, I have palpitation of the low!—Let us keep to facts—just remember in Maruskins' meadows, my Ugadi kept ear to ear with the Count Rasvachai and your dog.

**Tschubukov.** He was behind, because the Count struck him with his whip.

**Lomov.** Quite right. All the other dogs were on the fox's scent, but Otkatai found it necessary to bite a sheep.

**Tschubukov.** That isn't so!—I am sensitive about that and beg you to stop this argument. He struck him because everybody looks on a strange dog of good blood with envy. Even you, sir, aren't free from the sin. No sooner do you find a dog better than Ugadi than you begin to—this, that—his, mine—and so forth! I remember distinctly.

44 **Lomov.** I remember something, too!

**Tschubukov** (*mimicking him*). I remember something, too! What do you remember?

**Lomov.** Palpitation! My leg is lame—I can't—

45 **Natalia.** Palpitation! What kind of hunter are you? You ought to stay in the kitchen by the stove and wrestle with the potato peelings, and not go fox-hunting! Palpitation!

**Tschubukov.** And what kind of hunter are you? A man with your diseases ought to stay at home and not jolt around in the saddle. If you

were a hunter—! But you only ride around in order to find out about other people's dogs, and make trouble for everyone. I am sensitive! Let's drop the subject. Besides, you're no hunter.

**Lomov.** You only ride around to flatter the Count!—My heart! You intriguer! Swindler!

46 **Tschubukov.** And what of it? (*Shouting*) Be still!

**Lomov.** Intriguer!

47 **Tschubukov.** Baby! Puppy! Walking drugstore!

**Lomov.** Old rat! Oh, I know you!

**Tschubukov.** Be still! Or I'll shoot you—with my worst gun, like a partridge! Fool! Loafer!

**Lomov.** Everyone knows that—oh, my heart!—that your poor late wife beat you. My leg—my temples—Heavens—I'm dying—I—

**Tschubukov.** And your housekeeper wears the trousers in your house!

**Lomov.** Here—here—there—there—my heart has burst! My shoulder is torn apart. Where is my shoulder? I'm dying! (*He falls into a chair.*)

48 The doctor! (*Faints*)

**Tschubukov.** Baby! Half-baked clam! Fool!

**Natalia.** Nice sort of hunter you are! You can't even sit on a horse. (*To Tschubukov*) Papa, what's the matter with him? (*She screams.*) Ivan Vassiliyitch! He is dead!

**Lomov.** I'm ill! I can't breathe! Air!

**Natalia.** He is dead! (*She shakes Lomov in the chair.*) Ivan Vassiliyitch! What have we done! He is dead! (*She sinks into a chair.*) The doctor—doctor! (*She goes into hysterics.*)

**Tschubukov.** Ahh! What is it? What's the matter with you?

**Natalia** (*groaning*). He's dead!—Dead!

**Tschubukov.** Who is dead? Who? (*Looking at Lomov*) Yes, he is dead! Water! The doctor! (*Holding the glass to Lomov's lips*) Drink! No, he won't drink! He's dead! What a terrible situation! Why didn't I shoot myself? Why have I never cut my throat? What am I waiting for

## CLOSURE

Ask students to name some characteristics of the **farce** and illustrate those characteristics by reference to specific characters and scenes in *A Marriage Proposal*.

now? Only give me a knife! Give me a pistol! (Lomov *moves*.) He's coming to! Drink some water—there!

**Lomov.** Sparks! Mists! Where am I?

**49 Tschubukov.** Get married! Quick, and then go to the devil! She's willing! (*He joins the hands of Lomov and Natalia.*) She's agreed! Only leave me in peace!

**Lomov.** Wh—what? (*Getting up*) Whom?

**Tschubukov.** She's willing! Well? Kiss each other and—the devil take you both!

**Natalia** (*groans*). He lives! Yes, yes, I'm willing!

**Tschubukov.** Kiss each other!

**50 Lomov.** Eh? Whom? (*Natalia and Lomov kiss.*) Very nice—! Pardon me, but what is this for? Oh, yes, I understand! My heart—sparks—I am happy, Natalia Stepanovna. (*He kisses her hand.*) My leg is lame!

**Natalia.** I'm happy, too!

**Tschubukov.** Ahh! A load off my shoulders! Ahh!

**Natalia.** And now at least you'll admit that Ugadi is worse than Otkatai!

**Lomov.** Better!

**Natalia.** Worse!

**51 Tschubukov.** Now the domestic joys have begun.—Champagne!

**Lomov.** Better!

**Natalia.** Worse, worse, worse!

**Tschubukov** (*trying to drown them out*). Champagne, champagne!

[*Curtain.*]

## Reading Check

1. What is Lomov's purpose in coming to Tschubukov's home?
2. Why do Lomov and Natalia begin quarreling?
3. How much are the meadows actually worth?
4. What topic of conversation leads to the second quarrel?
5. What illnesses does Lomov complain of?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

- 1a. Why does Lomov want to marry Natalia?
- 1b. What does he think her qualifications are? c. Does he think she is his ideal love?
2. Considering the purpose of Lomov's visit, why is his argument with Natalia over the meadows particularly absurd?
3. Just when the characters seem to have patched up their quarrel, there is another disagreement. What causes this new conflict?
4. How does Lomov's state of health affect the outcome of the play?
5. What is ironic about the title of the play?

## Literary Elements

### Farce

**Farces** begin with an absurd situation: an unimportant lie gets someone into big trouble, or something crucial left unsaid causes a ruckus. The farcical basis of *A Marriage Proposal* is Lomov's inability to propose.

Other types of comedy begin with absurd situations. What makes a farce different is the el-

**49**

*With all the fighting that has occurred, why does Tschubukov still want Lomov and Natalia to marry?* Responses may vary. Perhaps Tschubukov believes all couples fight, or maybe he just wants daughter out of his house (cheaper for him).

**50**

**Irony.** Lomov finds himself being accepted without actually proposing.

**51**

**Irony.** Tschubukov's depiction of arguments as "domestic joys" is example of verbal irony.

### READING CHECK

1. To ask for Natalia's hand in marriage (p. 413).
2. He speaks of "his" meadows; she says they belong to her family (p. 415).
3. At most, 300 rubles (p. 415).
4. Natalia asks Lomov if he is going hunting, and he mentions that his dog limps (p. 418).
5. Heart palpitations; lame leg (pp. 414, 420).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. To "settle matters" and "live a well-regulated life" which would be good for his health.
- 1b. She's "an excellent housekeeper, not at all bad-looking, well educated." 1c. No, but he believes it is futile to wait for "an ideal or for true love."
2. If they marry, they will combine properties anyway.
3. Lomov and Natalia argue about who has better dog.
4. At height of quarrel, Lomov faints. Natalia becomes hysterical because she thinks he is dead. She is so glad to see him alive that she agrees to marry him.
5. Lomov never actually proposes, but Natalia accepts him anyway.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

You might wish to let students work in groups to create a modern version of the play, using contemporary language, **setting**, and **plot** line. Instead of two farmers, the characters could be neighbors in suburbia. Lomov and Natalia could

be seniors in the same high school. In this modern version, Lomov could ask Natalia for a date. What would seventeen-year-olds argue about instead of a meadow and hunting dogs? The situations your students contribute will develop into an enjoyable discussion.

Students might enjoy some of Chekhov's short stories, such as "A Dreary Story," "Ward No. Six," and "My Life." The film version of *The Three Sisters*, directed by and starring Laurence Olivier, is available on videocassette. You might want to screen the film for your class.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Examples: In opening scene, exaggerated courtesy of Tschubukov contrasts with his fear that Lomov may intend to ask for loan. There is even funnier exaggeration of his joy when he hears that Lomov wants to marry Natalia: "I am completely dumbfounded with pleasure . . ." In midst of excitement and exaggerated symptoms of ill health, Lomov reflects on reasons for intending to propose. Moment is comical because he will never actually propose to Natalia and because he certainly will never attain well-regulated life he anticipates.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. **Usurp**: to seize power or possessions illegally.

**Appropriate**: to take possession of something, frequently without permission.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

As students write about a character's appearance, background, and behavior, encourage the use of specific details and brief narration of episodes from the play to show the character in action.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

During his early playwriting career, Chekhov was frustrated by the poor quality of Russian theater, but he soon became part of one of the most famous theater renaissances in history. After Konstantin Stanislavsky and Vladimir Nemirovitch-Dantchenko founded the Moscow Art Theatre, they used Chekhov's later plays to experiment with acting techniques. The theater gave birth to a new style of realism in acting that was copied and taught in acting schools and theaters all over the world.

ement of **exaggeration**. While farce stops short of the pie-in-the-face physical humor of slapstick comedy, it can get fairly wild. Lomov's shrieking and fainting is a fair example.

In farce, characters are painted in broad, uncomplicated strokes. A character's every gesture and reaction is typical of that character. The characters do not have subtle internal contradictions.

- 1 Choose one of the episodes in the play and describe the farcical elements of character and situation.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Determining Precise Meanings

While they are trading insults, Lomov claims that Tschubukov's uncle was brought to trial as an *embezzler*. Shortly thereafter Natalia calls Lomov a *swindler*. The words *embezzler* and *swindler* are close in meaning, but they are not synonyms. To *embezzle* is to steal money or property that has been entrusted to one's care. To *swindle* is to use fraud or trickery to get money from someone else.

Look at the italicized words in this speech by Lomov:

According to you I'm a *usurper*, then, am I? My dear lady, I have never *appropriated* other people's property . . .

- 1 Check the meanings of the verbs *usurp* and *appropriate* in a dictionary. What is the precise meaning of each word?

## Writing About Literature

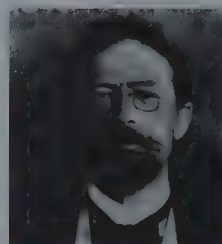
### ▶ Writing a Character Sketch

Write a character sketch of one character in *A Marriage Proposal*. Take care that you do not simply list traits. Instead, organize your infor-

mation into three or four general categories (for example, appearance, behavior, background) and write a series of linked paragraphs, each exploring one category.

## About the Author

### Anton Chekhov (1860–1904)



Chekhov was born in Taganrog (tăg'ən-răg'), a tiny Russian town he later described as "dirty and dull, with deserted streets and a lazy, ignorant population." His father was a shop-

keeper who loved the arts, tyrannized his family, and neglected his business so much that Anton and his brothers and sister grew up in poverty. In 1879, Chekhov moved to Moscow to study medicine. But most of his time was spent writing short stories and sketches, which he sold to literary magazines to support his family. Gradually, Chekhov practiced medicine less and less and began writing plays. First came a series of one-act comedies. *A Marriage Proposal* was among them. *Ivanov*, his first major play, was produced in 1887. It was followed by *The Sea Gull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Three Sisters*, and *The Cherry Orchard*.

In Chekhov's best writing, human nature is explored with scientific precision and loving compassion simultaneously. This is no small accomplishment. His characters frequently stop listening to each other, constantly contradict themselves, and always make up excuses for their own failings. Yet Chekhov was able to use these shortcomings in human nature to make his audiences laugh, and perhaps understand themselves a little better.

- ▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to compare characters' reactions to the landing of the spaceship. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 434 asks students to analyze modifiers in Vidal's stage directions as a way of understanding how the lines should be delivered.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students what they think a visitor from a distant planet would be like. How would they react to such a visitor? They may want to compare their imagined reactions to those of the characters in this play.

# Visit to a Small Planet

## GORE VIDAL

*Farce is one kind of comedy; satire is another. Satire holds up to ridicule certain human weaknesses or wrongdoings. What are the targets of Vidal's satire in this science-fiction teleplay?*

### Characters

Kreton	Aide
Roger Spelling	Paul Laurent
Ellen Spelling	Second Visitor
Mrs. Spelling	President of Paraguay
John Randolph	Technicians
General Powers	Soldiers

### Act One

Stock Shot:<sup>1</sup> *The night sky, stars. Then slowly a luminous object arcs into view. As it is almost upon us, dissolve to*<sup>2</sup> *the living room of the Spelling house in Maryland.*

*Superimpose card: "The Time: The Day After Tomorrow"*

*The room is comfortably balanced between the expensively decorated and the homely. Roger Spelling is concluding his TV broadcast. He is middle-aged, unctuous<sup>3</sup>, resonant. His wife, bored and vague, knits passively while he talks at his desk. Two Technicians are on hand, operating the equip-*

*ment. His daughter, Ellen, a lively girl of twenty, fidgets as she listens.*

**3 Spelling** (*into microphone*). . . and so, according to General Powers . . . who should know if anyone does . . . the flying object which has given rise to so much irresponsible conjecture is nothing more than a meteor passing through the earth's orbit. It is not, as many believe, a secret weapon of this country. Nor is it a spaceship as certain lunatic elements have suggested. General Powers has assured me that it is highly doubtful there is any form of life on other planets capable of building a spaceship.

**4** "If any traveling is to be done in space, we will do it first." And those are his exact words. . . Which winds up another week of news.

**5** (*Crosses to pose with wife and daughter*) This is Roger Spelling, saying good night to Mother and Father America, from my old homestead in Silver Glen, Maryland, close to the warm pulsebeat of the nation.

**Technician.** Good show tonight, Mr. Spelling.

**Spelling.** Thank you.

**6 Technician.** Yes sir, you were right on time.

### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes **satire** as a type of **comedy** that ridicules human weakness. Encourage students to note the kinds of human behavior that Vidal satirizes.

### Visit to a Small Planet

After students have read the play, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion and analysis of **satire**.

### Act One

**1**

As a TV news reporter, Roger Spelling's role is spokesman for society. Vidal satirizes falseness of television images of Spelling's home and know-it-all attitude.

**2**

*Do Spelling's wife and daughter enjoy his TV broadcast?* Apparently not. Mrs. Spelling is "bored and vague"; Ellen "fidgets."

**3**

Although Spelling cites an authority in his broadcast, what he reports as news is only opinion.

**4**

*How does Spelling stroke national pride?* Quotes General Powers' egotistical beliefs about who will be first to travel in space.

**5**

**Satire.** Clichés here and windy phrases above satirize television programming.

**6**

*Why does Technician praise Spelling's show? What does this suggest about quality of television newscasts?* It was right on time. Reflects concern with filling air time rather than with having something important to say.

**1. Stock shot:** film footage taken from the television studio's library rather than made specifically for the project at hand.

**2. dissolve to:** to cause one image to disappear while a second image appears simultaneously.

**3. unctuous** (ŭngk'chōō-əs): falsely earnest.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Mr. Spelding, a television announcer, is ending a news program that has been broadcast from his house. He has just authoritatively announced that a reported flying object is not a spaceship but a meteor.

He and his daughter are arguing about her boyfriend when the boyfriend arrives and says that a spaceship is landing in the Speldings' yard. It lands in the rose garden, and a man steps out, dressed in the fashion of the 1860s. Earth is his hobby, and he can read people's minds.

## PRESENTATION

Some prior study of vocabulary will help students enjoy their reading of this play. Remind students to use the Glossary if they cannot understand a word by using context clues.

Students will quickly notice that none of the

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

*Visit to a Small Planet* landed in American homes on Sunday, May 8, 1955. It was a production of the Goodyear TV Playhouse on the National Broadcasting Company Television Network; featured actors were Louis Edmonds, Cyril Ritchard, and Jill Kraft.



7

Mrs. Spelding's offhand reply suggests she probably did not listen to anything he said.

8

*In what two ways might Mrs. Spelding's comment be interpreted?* "They are an important public service" or "they pay our bills." Spelding cynically (and probably correctly) assumes she means the second.

9

Ellen was thinking about John rather than listening to news.

10

**Characterization.** Spelding believes ambition is the most important quality in a man.

[Spelding *nods wearily, his mechanical smile and heartiness suddenly gone.*]

7 **Mrs. Spelding.** Very nice, dear. Very nice.

**Technician.** See you next week, Mr. Spelding.

**Spelding.** Thank you, boys.

[Technicians *go.*]

**Spelding.** Did you like the broadcast, Ellen?

**Ellen.** Of course I did, Daddy.

**Spelding.** Then what did I say?

**Ellen.** Oh, that's not fair.

**Spelding.** It's not very flattering when one's own daughter won't listen to what one says while millions of people . . .

**Ellen.** I always listen, Daddy, you know that.

**Mrs. Spelding.** We love your broadcasts, dear.

8 I don't know what we'd do without them.

**Spelding.** Starve.

9 **Ellen.** I wonder what's keeping John?

**Spelding.** Certainly not work.

**Ellen.** Oh, Daddy, stop it! John works very hard and you know it.

**Mrs. Spelding.** Yes, he's a perfectly nice boy, Roger. I like him.

10 **Spelding.** I know, I know; he has every virtue except the most important one: he has no get-up-and-go.

**Ellen** (*precisely*). He doesn't want to get up and he doesn't want to go because he's already where he wants to be on his own farm, which is exactly where *I'm* going to be when we're married.

**Spelding.** More thankless than a serpent's tooth is an ungrateful child.<sup>4</sup>

4. **More . . . child:** The Speldings are misquoting lines from *King Lear* by William Shakespeare. The correct quotation is "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is/To have a thankless child!" (I, 4, 312)

characters are developed as real persons. Each character presented in the play is a stereotype. For example, Roger Spelding is an exaggerated version of the pompous and self-centered television broadcaster. General Powers is an arrogant, power-hungry military officer. But Vidal's pur-

pose is to comment on society, not to create character.

Students should be able to point out that even in the most melodramatic of space shows, there are redeeming qualities in some of the characters. However, Kreton, a character of great

power, is governed by an amoral and childish delight in "vibrations." He is even less admirable than the witless, professional stereotypes Spelding and Powers.

In contrast to these are a few characters to be admired. Laurent is dedicated to peace and is

**Ellen.** I don't think that's right. Isn't it "more deadly . . ."

**Spelding.** Whatever the exact quotation is, I stand by the sentiment.

**Mrs. Spelding.** Please don't quarrel. It always gives me a headache.

**Spelding.** I never quarrel. I merely reason, in my simple way, with Miss Know-it-all here.

**Ellen.** Oh, Daddy! Next you'll tell me I should marry for money.

**Spelding.** There is nothing wrong with marrying a wealthy man. The horror of it has always

11 **eluded me.** However, my only wish is that you marry someone hard-working, ambitious, a man who'll make his mark in the world. Not a boy who plans to sit on a farm all his life, growing peanuts.

**Ellen.** English walnuts.

**Spelding.** Will you stop correcting me?

**Ellen.** But, Daddy, John grows walnuts . . .

[John enters, breathlessly.]

12 **John.** Come out! Quickly. It's coming this way. It's going to land right here!

**Spelding.** What's going to land?

**John.** The spaceship. Look!

13 **Spelding.** Apparently you didn't hear my broadcast. The flying object in question is a meteor, not a spaceship.

[John has gone out with Ellen. Spelding and Mrs. Spelding follow.]

**Mrs. Spelding.** Oh, my! Look! Something is falling! Roger, you don't think it's going to hit the house, do you?

14 **Spelding.** The odds against being hit by a falling object that size are, I should say, roughly ten million to one.

**John.** Ten million to one or not, it's going to land right here and it's not falling.

**Spelding.** I'm sure it's a meteor.

**Mrs. Spelding.** Shouldn't we go down to the cellar?

15 **Spelding.** If it's not a meteor, it's an optical illusion . . . mass hysteria.

**Ellen.** Daddy, it's a real spaceship. I'm sure it is.

**Spelding.** Or maybe a weather balloon. Yes, that's what it is. General Powers said only yesterday . . .

**John.** It's landing!

**Spelding.** I'm going to call the police . . . the army! (*Bolts inside*)

**Ellen.** Oh, look how it shines!

**John.** Here it comes!

16 **Mrs. Spelding.** Right in my rose garden!

**Ellen.** Maybe it's a balloon.

**John.** No, it's a spaceship and right in your own backyard.

**Ellen.** What makes it shine so?

17 **John.** I don't know but I'm going to find out. (*Runs off toward the light*)

18 **Ellen.** Oh, darling, don't! John, please! John, John, come back!

[Spelding, wide-eyed, returns.]

**Mrs. Spelding.** Roger, it's landed right in my rose garden.

19 **Spelding.** I got General Powers. He's coming over. He said they've been watching this thing. They . . . they don't know what it is.

**Ellen.** You mean it's nothing of ours?

**Spelding.** They believe it . . . (*swallows hard*) . . . it's from outer space.

**Ellen.** And John's down there! Daddy, get a gun or something.

**Spelding.** Perhaps we'd better leave the house until the army gets here.

**Ellen.** We can't leave John.

**Spelding.** I can. (*Peers nearsightedly*) Why, it's not much larger than a car. I'm sure it's some kind of meteor.

11

**Why does Spelding find fault with John?** He wants his daughter to marry someone who will "make his mark in the world." Spelding thinks John lacks "get-up-and-go," and he probably wants Ellen to marry someone more like himself.

12

**Characterization.** John is excited and interested in what is happening; does not depend on others to interpret reality for him.

13

**Satire.** Spelding is not interested in what is happening; he believes his news broadcast is definitive.

14

Spelding speaks authoritatively, as if he knows about meteors; ignores evidence.

15

**Characterization.** Spelding continues to try to make evidence fit his answers. When he can no longer deny what he sees, he panics, calls police and army.

16

Apparently, Mrs. Spelding's primary concern is her rose garden.

17

John, unlike Spelding, relies on his own perceptions, not what he is told.

18

Ellen's main worry is for John.

19

Spelding still relies on General Powers to tell him what he sees.



apparently a man of integrity, and John and Ellen are honest and lively.

20

Spelding refuses to trust what he sees, perhaps waiting for General Powers to tell him creature's identity.

21

**Characterization.** Mrs. Spelding is indirectly and humorously defined by her way of judging people on appearances.

22

**What is immediately established by Kreton's first statement?** Visitor makes mistakes.

23

Spelding sees chance to get exclusive interview.

24

The name Kreton alludes to Krypton, original planet of the popular comic-book figure Superman, and is a satiric pun on *cretin* (at home Kreton is deemed mentally retarded).

25

Awaiting the army, Spelding acts hospitable but hopes for an interview.

26

Kreton is time-traveler.

27

Kreton can read minds.

28

**Irony.** Reverses expectations—humans are supposed to have hobbies, not be someone else's hobby.

**Ellen.** Meteors are blazing hot.

**Spelding.** This is a cold one . . .

**Ellen.** It's opening . . . the whole side's opening! (*Shouts*) John! Come back! Quick. . .

**Mrs. Spelding.** Why, there's a man getting out of it! (*Sighs*) I feel much better already. I'm sure if we ask him, he'll move that thing for us. Roger, you ask him.

20 **Spelding** (*ominously*). If it's really a man?

**Ellen.** John's shaking hands with him. (*Calls*) John darling, come on up here . . .

**Mrs. Spelding.** And bring your friend . . .

**Spelding.** There's something wrong with the way that creature looks . . . if it is a man and not a . . . not a monster.

21 **Mrs. Spelding.** He looks perfectly nice to me.

[*John and the Visitor appear. The Visitor is in his forties, a mild, pleasant-looking man with side whiskers and dressed in the fashion of 1860. He pauses when he sees the three people, in silence for a moment. They stare back at him, equally interested.*]

22 **Visitor.** I seem to've made a mistake. I am sorry. I'd better go back and start over again.

23 **Spelding.** My dear sir, you've only just arrived. Come in, come in. I don't need to tell you what a pleasure this is . . . Mister . . . Mister . . .

24 **Visitor.** Kreton . . . This is the wrong costume, isn't it?

**Spelding.** Wrong for what?

**Kreton.** For the country, and the time.

**Spelding.** Well, it's a trifle old-fashioned.

**Mrs. Spelding.** But really awfully handsome.

**Kreton.** Thank you.

**Mrs. Spelding** (*to husband*). Ask him about moving that thing off my rose bed.

[*Spelding leads them all into living room.*]

25 **Spelding.** Come on in and sit down. You must be tired after your trip.

**Kreton.** Yes, I am a little. (*Looks around delightedly*) Oh, it's better than I'd hoped!

**Spelding.** Better? What's better?

**Kreton.** The house . . . that's what you call it? Or is this an apartment?

**Spelding.** This is a house in the State of Maryland, U.S.A.

26 **Kreton.** In the late twentieth century! To think this is really the twentieth century. I must sit down a moment and collect myself. The *real* thing! (*He sits down.*)

**Ellen.** You . . . you're not an American, are you?

**Kreton.** What a nice thought! No, I'm not.

**John.** You sound more English.

**Kreton.** Do I? Is my accent very bad?

**John.** No, it's quite good.

**Spelding.** Where *are* you from, Mr. Kreton?

**Kreton** (*evasively*). Another place.

**Spelding.** On this earth, of course.

**Kreton.** No, not on this planet.

**Ellen.** Are you from Mars?

**Kreton.** Oh dear, no, not Mars. There's nobody on Mars . . . at least no one I know.

**Ellen.** I'm sure you're testing us and this is all some kind of publicity stunt.

**Kreton.** No, I really am from another place.

**Spelding.** I don't suppose you'd consent to my interviewing you on television?

**Kreton.** I don't think your authorities will like that. They are terribly upset as it is.

**Spelding.** How do you know?

27 **Kreton.** Well, I . . . pick up things. For instance, I know that in a few minutes a couple of people from your army will be here to question me and they . . . like you . . . are torn by doubt.

**Spelding.** How extraordinary!

**Ellen.** Why did you come here?

28 **Kreton.** Simply a visit to your small planet. I've been studying it for years. In fact, one might say, you people are my hobby. Especially this period of your development.



Scene from a 1957 stage production of *Visit to a Small Planet*.  
New York Public Library

**John.** Are you the first person from your . . . your planet to travel in space like this?

**29 Kreton.** Oh my, no! Everyone travels who wants to. It's just that no one wants to visit you. I can't think why. *I* always have. You'd be surprised what a thorough study I've made. (*Re-cites*) The planet, Earth, is divided into five continents with a number of large islands. It is mostly water. There is one moon. Civilization is only just beginning. . . .

**Spelding.** Just beginning! My dear sir, we have had . . .

**Kreton** (*blandly*). You are only in the initial stages, the most fascinating stage as far as I'm concerned . . . I do hope I don't sound patronizing.

**Ellen.** Well, we are very proud.

**30 Kreton.** I know, and that's one of your most endearing, primitive traits. Oh, I can't believe I'm here at last!

[General Powers, a vigorous product of the National Guard, and his Aide enter.]

**31 Powers.** All right, folks. The place is surrounded by troops. Where is the monster?

**Kreton.** I, my dear General, am the monster.

**Powers.** What are you dressed up for, a fancy-dress party?

**Kreton.** I'd hoped to be in the costume of the period. As you see, I am about a hundred years too late.

**Powers.** Roger, who is this joker?

**Spelding.** This is Mr. Kreton . . . General Powers. Mr. Kreton arrived in that thing outside. He is from another planet.

**Powers.** I don't believe it.

**Ellen.** It's true. We saw him get out of the flying saucer.

**Powers** (*to Aide*). Captain, go down and look at that ship. But be careful. Don't touch anything. And don't let anybody else near it. (*Aide goes*.)

**32** So you're from another planet.

**33 Kreton.** Yes. My, that's a very smart uniform but I prefer the ones made of metal, the ones you used to wear, you know: with the feathers on top.

**Powers.** That was five hundred years ago . . . Are you *sure* you're not from the Earth?

**Kreton.** Yes.

**34 Powers.** Well, I'm not. You've got some pretty tall explaining to do.

**Kreton.** Anything to oblige.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

This photograph of a scene from the stage production of *Visit to a Small Planet* shows an aspect of one actor's portrayal of Kreton. Based on the evidence presented in this photograph—such as facial expression and posture—students might write a paragraph describing Kreton's character.

**29**

Again Kreton's statement reverses human tendency to think of Earth and its inhabitants as center of universe.

**30**

In spite of his stated wish not to be patronizing, Kreton's attitude seems condescending.

**31**

**Characterization.** Powers assumes that visitor will be a monster since he is not from Earth.

**32**

Kreton does not conform to Powers' ideas about extraplanetary visitors; he is not a "monster," so Powers does not believe he's from another planet.

**33**

**Foreshadowing.** Kreton's knowledge of medieval armor hints at his fascination with war.

**34**

**What does Powers' comment illustrate about his personality?** His ingrained suspicion of others and his certainty that he is in command. Ironically, Kreton could command Powers to answer to him.

35

*How might Kreton's answers be categorized?* They are patronizing.

36

*Epithet.* Buster expresses both General's disrespect for Kreton and impatience with Kreton's answers.

37

Powers never stops to think that "the law" may not mean much to someone from another planet.

38

Kreton's patronizing attitude enrages Powers, who assumes he is still in control.

39

*Irony.* Kreton, as the audience will learn, would be so cruel.

40

First encounter with Kreton has not changed characters' reaction to him. Spelding is still hoping for a news "scoop," Mrs. Spelding is still worrying about rose garden, and John is still curious, still interested in the ship and its makers.

**Powers.** All right, which planet?

35 **Kreton.** None that you have ever heard of.

**Powers.** Where is it?

**Kreton.** You wouldn't know.

**Powers.** This solar system?

**Kreton.** No.

**Powers.** Another system?

**Kreton.** Yes.

36 **Powers.** Look, Buster, I don't want to play games: I just want to know where you're from.

37 The law requires it.

**Kreton.** It's possible that I could explain it to a mathematician but I'm afraid I couldn't explain it to you, not for another five hundred years and by then of course *you'd* be dead because you people do die, don't you?

**Powers.** What?

**Kreton.** Poor fragile butterflies, such brief little moments in the sun . . . You see, *we* don't die.

38 **Powers.** You'll die all right if it turns out you're a spy or a hostile alien.

39 **Kreton.** I'm sure you wouldn't be so cruel.

[Aide returns; he looks disturbed.]

**Powers.** What did you find?

**Aide.** I'm not sure, General.

**Powers** (*heavily*). Then do your best to describe what the object is like.

**Aide.** Well, it's elliptical, with a fourteen-foot diameter. And it's made of an unknown metal which shines and inside there isn't anything.

**Powers.** Isn't anything?

**Aide.** There's nothing inside the ship: no instruments, no food, nothing.

**Powers** (*to Kreton*). What did you do with your instrument board?

**Kreton.** With my what? Oh, I don't have one.

**Powers.** How does the thing travel?

**Kreton.** I don't know.

**Powers.** You don't know. Now look, mister, you're in pretty serious trouble. I suggest you do a bit of cooperating. You claim you traveled

here from outer space in a machine with no instruments . . .

**Kreton.** Well, these cars are rather common in my world and I suppose, once upon a time, I must've known the theory on which they operate but I've long since forgotten. After all, General, we're not mechanics, you and I.

**Powers.** Roger, do you mind if we use your study?

**Spelding.** Not at all. Not at all, General.

**Powers.** Mr. Kreton and I are going to have a chat. (*To Aide*) Put in a call to the Chief of Staff.

**Aide.** Yes, General.

[Spelding rises, leads Kreton and Powers into next room, a handsomely furnished study, many books and a globe of the world.]

**Spelding.** This way, gentlemen.

[Kreton sits down comfortably beside the globe, which he twirls thoughtfully. At the door, Spelding speaks in a low voice to Powers.]

40 I hope I'll be the one to get the story first, Tom.

**Powers.** There isn't any story. Complete censorship. I'm sorry but this house is under martial law. I've a hunch we're in trouble.

[He shuts the door. Spelding turns and rejoins his family.]

**Ellen.** I think he's wonderful, whoever he is.

**Mrs. Spelding.** I wonder how much damage he did to my rose garden . . .

**John.** It's sure hard to believe he's really from outer space. No instruments, no nothing . . . boy, they must be advanced scientifically.

**Mrs. Spelding.** Is he spending the night, dear?

**Spelding.** What?





## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Facial expression and body language are important to the success of an actor's performance. Students might select one of the actors in this photograph from a production of *Visit to a Small Planet* and describe the impression that the actor manages to convey without the use of words. They might also consider whether this impression is consistent with the impression of the character that they gained from reading the teleplay.

**Mrs. Spelling.** Is he spending the night?

**Spelling.** Oh yes, yes, I suppose he will be.

**41 Mrs. Spelling.** Then I'd better go make up the bedroom. He seems perfectly nice to me. I like his whiskers. They're so very . . . comforting. Like Grandfather Spelling's. *(She goes.)*

**Spelling** *(bitterly)*. I *know* this story will leak out before I can interview him. I just know it.

**Ellen.** What does it mean, we're under martial law?

**Spelling.** It means we have to do what General

Powers tells us to do. *(He goes to the window as a Soldier passes by.)* See?

**John.** I wish I'd taken a closer look at that ship when I had the chance.

**Ellen.** Perhaps he'll give us a ride in it.

**John.** Traveling in space! Just like those stories. You know: intergalactic drive stuff.

**Spelling.** *If he's not an impostor.*

**Ellen.** I have a feeling he isn't.

**42 John.** Well, I better call the family and tell them I'm all right.

**41**

**Characters.** Spelling and his wife are flat characters—stereotypes. Their concerns do not change. He is concerned with advancing his career; she makes superficial judgments and is concerned with superficial details.

**42**

John is concerned for his family—another detail that makes him a sympathetic character.

43

Kreton had told Powers he would not be able to understand, and he has not.

44

Powers keeps trying to assert importance; Kreton continues to patronize.

45

*In what way is Powers as single-minded as Spelding?* Powers is ambitious. While Spelding sees visit as possible journalistic scoop, Powers sees it as sure step to higher rank.

46

*Characterization.* Kreton again reveals he does not think as his people do.

47

*Foreshadowing.* Kreton's laugh and his characterization of himself as impulsive hint at his dangerous enthusiasms. If Powers were alert, he might infer that Kreton does things that his people do not do.

[*He crosses to telephone by the door which leads into hall.*]

**Aide.** I'm sorry, sir, but you can't use the phone.

**Spelding.** He certainly can. This is my house . . .

**Aide** (*mechanically*). This house is a military reservation until the crisis is over: order General Powers. I'm sorry.

**John.** How am I to call home to say where I am?

**Aide.** Only General Powers can help you. You're also forbidden to leave this house without permission.

**Spelding.** You can't do this!

**Aide.** I'm afraid, sir, we've done it.

**Ellen.** Isn't it exciting!

[*Cut to*<sup>5</sup> *study.*]

43 **Powers.** Are you deliberately trying to confuse me?

**Kreton.** Not deliberately, no.

**Powers.** We have gone over and over this for two hours now and all that you've told me is that you're from another planet in another solar system . . .

**Kreton.** In another dimension. I think that's the word you use.

**Powers.** In another dimension and you have come here as a tourist.

**Kreton.** Up to a point, yes. What did you expect?

44 **Powers.** It is my job to guard the security of this country.

**Kreton.** I'm sure that must be very interesting work.

**Powers.** For all I know, you are a spy, sent here by an alien race to study us, preparatory to invasion.

5. **Cut to:** to change the camera angle or scene abruptly, without using a dissolve.

**Kreton.** Oh, none of my people would *dream* of invading you.

**Powers.** How do I know that's true?

**Kreton.** You don't, so I suggest you believe me. I should also warn you: I can tell what's inside.

**Powers.** What's inside?

**Kreton.** What's inside your mind.

**Powers.** You're a mind reader?

**Kreton.** I don't really read it. I hear it.

**Powers.** What am I thinking?

**Kreton.** That I am either a lunatic from the earth or a spy from another world.

**Powers.** Correct. But then you could've guessed that. (*Frowns*) What am I thinking now?

45 **Kreton.** You're making a picture. Three silver stars. You're pinning them on your shoulder, instead of the two stars you now wear.

**Powers** (*startled*). That's right. I was thinking of my promotion.

**Kreton.** If there's anything I can do to hurry it along, just let me know.

**Powers.** You can. Tell me why you're here.

**Kreton.** Well, we don't travel much, my people. We used to, but since we see everything through special monitors and re-creators, there is no particular need to travel. However,

46 *I am a hobbyist. I love to gad about.*

**Powers** (*taking notes*). Are you the first to visit us?

**Kreton.** Oh, no! We started visiting you long before there were people on the planet. However, we are seldom noticed on our trips. I'm sorry to say I slipped up, coming in the way I did . . . but then this visit was all rather impromptu. (*Laughs*) I am a creature of impulse, I fear.

[*Aide looks in.*]

**Aide.** Chief of Staff on the telephone, General.

**Powers** (*picks up phone*). Hello, yes, sir. Powers

speaking. I'm talking to him now. No, sir. No, **49 Powers.** Don't let him out of your sight.

sir. No, we can't determine what method of power was used. He won't talk. Yes, sir. I'll hold him there. I've put the house under martial law . . . belongs to a friend of mine, Roger Spelding, the TV commentator. Roger **50** Spelding, the TV . . . What? Oh, no, I'm sure he won't say anything. Who . . . oh, yes, sir. Yes, I realize the importance of it. Yes, I will. Goodbye. (*Hangs up*) The President of the United States wants to know all about you.

**Kreton.** How nice of him! And I want to know all about him. But I do wish you'd let me rest a bit first. Your language is still not familiar to me. I had to learn them all, quite exhausting.

**Powers.** You speak *all* our languages?

**Kreton.** Yes, all of them. But then it's easier than you might think since I can see what's inside.

**Powers.** Speaking of what's inside, we're going to take your ship apart.

**48 Kreton.** Oh, I wish you wouldn't.

**Powers.** Security demands it.

**Kreton.** In that case *my* security demands you leave it alone.

**Powers.** You plan to stop us?

**Kreton.** I already have. . . . Listen.

[*Far-off shouting. Aide rushes into the study.*]

**Aide.** Something's happened to the ship, General. The door's shut and there's some kind of wall all around it, an invisible wall. We can't get near it.

**Kreton** (*to camera*). I hope there was no one inside.

**Powers** (*to Kreton*). How did you do that?

**Kreton.** I couldn't begin to explain. Now if you don't mind, I think we should go in and see our hosts.

[*He rises, goes into living room. Powers and Aide look at each other.*]

[*Cut to living room as Powers picks up phone. Kreton is with John and Ellen.*]

**50 Kreton.** I don't mind curiosity but I really can't permit them to wreck my poor ship.

**Ellen.** What do you plan to do, now you're here?

**Kreton.** Oh, keep busy. I have a project or two. . . . (*Sighs*) I can't believe you're real.

**John.** Then we're all in the same boat.

**Kreton.** Boat? Oh, yes! Well, I should have come ages ago but I . . . I couldn't get away until yesterday.

**John.** Yesterday? It only took you a *day* to get here?

**Kreton.** One of *my* days, not yours. But then you don't know about time yet.

**John.** Oh, you mean relativity.

**Kreton.** No, it's much more involved than that. You won't know about time until . . . now let me see if I remember . . . no, I don't, but it's about two thousand years.

**John.** What do we do between now and then?

**Kreton.** You simply go on the way you are, living your exciting primitive lives . . . you have no idea how much fun you're having now.

**Ellen.** I hope you'll stay with us while you're here.

**Kreton.** That's very nice of you. Perhaps I will. Though I'm sure you'll get tired of having a visitor underfoot all the time.

**Ellen.** Certainly not. And Daddy will be deliriously happy. He can interview you by the hour.

**John.** What's it like in outer space?

**Kreton.** Dull.

**Ellen.** I should think it would be divine!

[*Powers enters.*]

**Kreton.** No, General, it won't work.

**48**

Kreton condescendingly deflects Powers' crude attempt at humor, then reminds him that "security" has more than one side.

**49**

Powers has just received evidence of Kreton's power, but he does not change his behavior or his beliefs.

**50**

Kreton sounds like adult talking about naughty children. The calm manner he adopts with his naughty children has a sinister quality.

**51**

Kreton misleads John and Ellen by using phrase "get away" to imply that he was too busy to travel; later it is revealed that he has actually escaped.



52

**Plot.** Powers finds his powers thwarted by Kreton at every turn.

53

**In what ways does Kreton's mind-reading add to the play?** Both to comment on human behavior and to create humor—here by revealing nature of Ellen's and John's thoughts.

54

Kreton's main reason for visiting Earth: to intoxicate himself with primitive emotions.

55

Kreton associates emotions with colors. Purple is for passion.

56

**Irony.** Audience knows that Powers has no authority or "power" over Kreton.

57

"Except for me": important exception.

58

**Foreshadowing.** "And that's all there is to it" is clue that there is more to it.

59

Kreton is, in a sense, "native"; audience learns in Act Three that return to Earth is return to "roots."

60

**Irony.** Powers' assumption is true with respect to Kreton.

52 **Powers.** What won't work?

**Kreton.** Trying to blow up my little force field.<sup>6</sup>  
You'll just plow up Mrs. Spelding's garden.

[Powers snarls and goes into study.]

53 **Ellen.** Can you tell what we're all thinking?

**Kreton.** Yes. As a matter of fact, it makes me a bit giddy. Your minds are not at all like ours. You see, we control our thoughts while you . . . well, it's extraordinary the things you think about!

**Ellen.** Oh, how awful! You can tell *everything* we think?

54 **Kreton.** Everything! It's one of the reasons I'm here, to intoxicate myself with your primitive minds . . . with the wonderful rawness of your emotions! You have no idea how it excites me! You simply seethe with unlikely emotions.

**Ellen.** I've never felt so sordid.

**John.** From now on I'm going to think about agriculture.

**Spelding** (*entering*). You would.

**Ellen.** Daddy!

55 **Kreton.** No, no. You must go right on thinking about Ellen. Such wonderfully *purple* thoughts!

**Spelding.** Now see here, Powers, you're carrying this martial law thing too far . . .

**Powers.** Unfortunately, until I have received word from Washington as to the final disposition of this problem, you must obey my orders: no telephone calls, no communication with the outside.

**Spelding.** This is unsupportable.

**Kreton.** Poor Mr. Spelding! If you like, I shall go. That would solve everything, wouldn't it?

56 **Powers.** You're not going anywhere, Mr. Kreton, until I've had my instructions.

**Kreton.** I sincerely doubt if you could stop me.

6. **force field:** a space inside of which electrical or magnetic energies are active.

However, I put it up to Mr. Spelding. Shall I go?

**Spelding.** Yes! (Powers *gestures a warning*.) Do stay, I mean, we want you to get a good impression of us . . .

**Kreton.** And of course you still want to be the first journalist to interview me. Fair enough. All right, I'll stay on for a while.

**Powers.** Thank you.

**Kreton.** Don't mention it.

**Spelding.** General, may I ask our guest a few questions?

**Powers.** Go right ahead, Roger. I hope you'll do better than I did.

**Spelding.** Since you read our minds, you probably already know what our fears are.

**Kreton.** I do, yes.

**Spelding.** We are afraid that you represent a hostile race.

**Kreton.** And I have assured General Powers that my people are not remotely hostile. Ex-

57 cept for me, no one is interested in this planet's present stage.

**Spelding.** Does this mean you might be interested in a *later* stage?

**Kreton.** I'm not permitted to discuss your future. Of course my friends think me perverse to be interested in a primitive society, but there's no accounting for tastes, is there? You are my hobby. I love you. And that's all there is to it.

**Powers.** So you're just here to look around . . . sort of going native.

59 **Kreton.** What a nice expression! That's it exactly. I am going native.

**Powers** (*grimly*). Well, it is my view that you have been sent here by another civilization for the express purpose of reconnoitering prior to invasion.

60 **Kreton.** That *would* be your view! The wonderfully primitive assumption that all strangers are hostile. You're almost too good to be true, General.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to analyze the play's characters according to the way they react to the arrival of the spaceship. What do their reactions say about their attitudes toward life?

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

It might be interesting for your students to compare *Visit to a Small Planet* with Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*, a classic of science fiction. *The Martian Chronicles* is a series of short stories which begin in the year 1999 and deal

with the arrival of Earthlings on Mars. Your students might write an essay comparing and contrasting the reception of Kreton by Earthlings with the reception of Earthlings by Martians in *The Martian Chronicles*.

**Powers.** You deny your people intend to make trouble for us?

**Kreton.** I deny it.

**Powers.** Then are they interested in establishing communication with us? Trade? That kind of thing?

**Kreton.** We have always had communication with you. As for trade, well, we do not trade . . . that is something peculiar only to your social level. (*Quickly*) Which I'm not criticizing! As you know, I approve of everything you do.

**Powers.** I give up.

**Spelding.** You have no interest then in . . . well, trying to dominate the earth.

**Kreton.** Oh, yes!

**Powers.** I thought you just said your people weren't interested in us.

**Kreton.** *They're* not, but *I* am.

**Powers.** You!

**Kreton.** Me . . . I mean I. You see, I've come here to take charge.

**Powers.** Of the United States?

**Kreton.** No, of the whole world. I'm sure you'll be much happier and it will be great fun for me. You'll get used to it in no time.

**Powers.** This is ridiculous. How can one man take over the world?

**Kreton** (*gaily*). Wait and see!

**Powers** (*to Aide*). Grab him!

[*Powers and Aide rush Kreton but within a foot of him, they stop, stunned.*]

ing when you wake up. And now, good night, dear, wicked children. . .

[*He goes as we fade out.*]

## Reading Check

1. Why does Spelding disapprove of Ellen's beau?
2. Where does the spaceship land?
3. Why does Kreton think he has made a mistake?
4. How does Kreton prevent the soldiers from taking his spaceship apart?
5. According to Kreton, why has he come to the earth?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

**1a.** How does the setting of Spelding's newscast differ from that of a typical newscast today? **b.** What is the significance of setting the play in Maryland, close to "the warm pulse-beat of the nation"?

**2.** Compare the reactions of the different characters to the landing of the spaceship. Of these reactions, which do you think is the most appropriate and why?

**3.** "I do hope I don't sound patronizing," Kreton says at one point. **a.** List some instances in which Kreton does behave in a patronizing manner. **b.** What powers or qualities does Kreton have that make him superior to people on Earth? **c.** Why is his playfulness both amusing and sinister?

**4a.** What is absurd about Powers' angry, threatening attitude? **b.** What is ironic about Powers' belief that Kreton represents a hostile race?

61

Kreton's desire to rule world for fun makes his "game" and his benign approval of human behavior ominous.

## READING CHECK

1. John is not ambitious (p. 425).
2. Mrs. Spelding's rose garden (p. 425).
3. Notices, by others' dress, that he is in different time period than he expected (p. 426).
4. Erects invisible wall that they cannot penetrate (p. 431).
5. To take charge of the world (p. 433).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** Spelding's home, not studio.  
**1b.** Is near nation's capital, Washington, D.C.

**2.** Mr. Spelding incredulous, then wary. Later, greets visitor hospitably, asks questions, thinks about possible interview. Mrs. Spelding worries about roses, greets visitor politely. John, interested, goes to ship, escorts Kreton to house. John does not want his family to worry. Ellen worries about John's safety; she is intrigued by visitor, eager to know his experiences. General surrounds area with troops, demands to see "monster." Means to protect nation, win promotion. John's and Ellen's reactions seem most sensible. Might be wise to show friendly interest to superior visitors from space.

**3a.** Finds place and customs quaint; says no one else wants to visit planet, but Earth is his hobby; thinks human pride is "endearing, primitive"; wishes General would wear armor; does not think General could understand where he came from.

**3b.** Can hear what people think; is immortal; travels in ship with no power source; knows all languages of Earth; puts invisible wall around spaceship; feels he is able to take over world.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to evaluate how Vidal uses Kreton's purposes, and the characters' reactions to those purposes, to satirize the human race. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

3c. Opinions will vary. He is like child with new toy but has so much power no one on Earth can stop him.

4a. His views and tactics are inappropriate and ineffective with unknown visitor from outer space. 4b. Powers is hostile before he knows anything about visitor. Kreton's people are not hostile, but Kreton wants to rule world.

5. Kreton wants to rule world; people are unable to stop him.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

**1. Ominously:** threateningly. (Spoken slowly in lowered voice, stressing *really*, as if speaker is in doubt.)

**Evasive:** vaguely; not straightforwardly. (Spoken quickly; ended abruptly.)

**Blandly:** mildly; showing lack of interest; unemotionally. (Read in monotone.)

**Mechanically:** done without spirit; routinely; automatically. (Spoken strongly, clearly, as if spoken often.)

## Act Two

1

Reading cat's mind, Kreton finds her "beautifully predatory"—another clue to what he admires. Encourages cat to fight back against dogs.

2

Kreton perceives cat's bold, cunning, predatory thoughts as bright red. Earlier saw John's thoughts as purple thoughts. Later will see General Powers' thoughts as black.

3

Foil. Ellen is naively generous, not like Kreton and the cat. His compliment is strong proof of her kind nature since Kreton can read her thoughts.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. Ask students to look for words that are used in unexpected or highly unusual ways. Who uses these words, and what might unusual usage suggest about the **character** speaking?

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

What would the students think of if asked to name their greatest pleasure? Would they agree with Kreton that the greatest human pleasure is violence?

5. At the end of the act, the conflict of the play becomes apparent. State the conflict in terms of who wants what.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Finding Meanings of Modifiers

A number of Vidal's stage directions are adverbs that tell the actors precisely how to deliver their speeches. When Spelding sees Kreton getting out of the spaceship, he speaks *ominously* (page 426). When Kreton is asked where he comes from, he responds *evasively* (page 426). In referring to the primitive state of civilization on earth, Kreton speaks *blandly* (page 427). The aide who keeps John from using the telephone answers questions *mechanically* (page 430).

1 Find the exact meanings of these adverbs and demonstrate how each speech would be spoken.

## Act Two

Fade in on<sup>1</sup> Kreton's bedroom next morning. He lies fully clothed on bed with cat in his lap.

**Kreton.** Poor cat! Of course I sympathize with you. Dogs *are* distasteful. What? Oh, I can well believe they do: yes, yes, how disgusting. They don't ever groom their fur! But you do *constantly*, such a fine coat. No, no, I'm not just saying that, I really mean it: exquisite texture. Of course, I wouldn't say it was *nicer* than skin but even so . . . What? Oh, no! They *chase* you! Dogs chase you for no reason at all except pure malice? You poor creature. Ah, but you *do* fight back! That's right! Give it to them: slash, bite, scratch! Don't let them get away with a

1. **Fade in on:** to cause an image to appear gradually on the screen in place of darkness.

trick . . . No! Do dogs really do that? Well, I'm sure you don't. What . . . oh, well, yes, I completely agree about mice. They *are* delicious! (Ugh!) Pounce, snap, and there is a heavenly dinner. No, I don't know any mice yet . . . they're not very amusing? But, after all, think how you must terrify them because you are so bold, so cunning, so beautifully predatory!

(Knock at door) Come in.

**Ellen** (enters). Good morning. I brought you your breakfast.

**Kreton.** How thoughtful! (Examines bacon) Delicious, but I'm afraid my stomach is not like yours, if you'll pardon me. I don't eat. (Removes pill from his pocket and swallows it) This is all I need for the day. (Indicates cat) Unlike this creature, who would eat her own weight every hour, given a chance.

**Ellen.** How do you know?

**Kreton.** We've had a talk.

**Ellen.** You can *speak* to the cat?

**Kreton.** Not speak exactly, but we communicate. I look inside and the cat cooperates.

2 Bright red thoughts, very exciting, though rather on one level.

**Ellen.** Does kitty like us?

**Kreton.** No, I wouldn't say she did. But then she has very few thoughts not connected with food. Have you, my quadruped criminal? (He strokes the cat, which jumps to the floor.)

**Ellen.** You know you've really upset everyone.

**Kreton.** I supposed that I would.

**Ellen.** Can you really take over the world, just like that?

**Kreton.** Oh, yes.

**Ellen.** What do you plan to do when you *have* taken over?

**Kreton.** Ah, that is my secret.

3 **Ellen.** Well, I think you'll be a very nice President, if they let you, of course.

**Kreton.** What a sweet girl you are! Marry him right away.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 58 / Reading Check 33 / Vocabulary Test 22 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 49



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The act opens with Kreton engrossed in a conversation of sorts with the Speldings' cat. Kreton has decided that he must demonstrate his strength in order to convince people that he may take charge of the world. Kreton sends for the

President of the United States but brings the President of Paraguay by mistake. Then Kreton confers with the Secretary-General of the World Council, who first believes that Kreton will bring peace but then learns Kreton's real intentions.

## PRESENTATION

The primary purpose of this act is to satirize mankind by revealing the thoughts and purposes of Kreton. Kreton's authority comes from his position as an outsider who is able to see into the human mind. He is from what is apparently an

**Ellen.** Marry John?

**Kreton.** Yes. I see it in your head *and* in his. He wants you very much.

**Ellen.** Well, we plan to get married this summer, if Father doesn't fuss too much.

**Kreton.** Do it before then. I shall arrange it all if you like.

**Ellen.** How?

**4 Kreton.** I can convince your father.

**Ellen.** That sounds awfully ominous. I think you'd better leave poor Daddy alone.

**Kreton.** Whatever you say. *(Sighs)* Oh, I love it so! When I woke up this morning I had to pinch myself to prove I was really here.

**Ellen.** We were all doing a bit of pinching too. Ever since dawn we've had nothing but visitors and phone calls and troops outside in the garden. No one has the faintest idea what to do about you.

**Kreton.** Well, I don't think they'll be confused much longer.

**Ellen.** How do you plan to conquer the world?

**Kreton.** I confess I'm not sure. I suppose I must make some demonstration of strength, **5** some colorful trick that will frighten everyone . . . though I much prefer taking charge quietly. That's why I've sent for the President.

**Ellen.** The President? *Our* President?

**Kreton.** Yes, he'll be along any minute now.

**Ellen.** But the President just doesn't go around visiting people.

**6 Kreton.** He'll visit me. *(Chuckles)* It may come as a surprise to him, but he'll be in this house in a few minutes. I think we'd better go downstairs now. *(To cat)* No, I will not give you a mouse. You must get your own. Be self-reliant. Beast!

[Dissolve to the study. Powers is reading book entitled *The Atom and You*. Muffled explosions off-stage.]

**Aide** *(entering)*. Sir, nothing seems to be working. **7** Do we have the General's permission to try a fission bomb on the force field?

**Powers.** No . . . no. We'd better give it up.

**Aide.** The men are beginning to talk.

**Powers** *(thundering)*. Well, keep them quiet! *(Contritely)* I'm sorry, Captain. I'm on edge. Fortunately, the whole business will soon be in the hands of the World Council.

**Aide.** What will the World Council do?

**Powers.** It will be interesting to observe them.

**Aide.** You don't think this Kreton can really take over the world, do you?

**Powers.** Of course not. Nobody can.

[Dissolve to living room. Mrs. Spelling and Spelling are talking.]

**8 Mrs. Spelling.** You still haven't asked Mr. Kreton about moving that thing, have you?

**Spelling.** There are too many *important* things to ask him.

**Mrs. Spelling.** I hate to be a nag but you know the trouble I have had getting anything to grow in that part of the garden . . .

**John** *(enters)*. Good morning.

**Mrs. Spelling.** Good morning, John.

**John.** Any sign of your guest?

**Mrs. Spelling.** Ellen took his breakfast up to him a few minutes ago.

**John.** They don't seem to be having much luck, do they? I sure hope you don't mind my staying here like this.

[Spelling glowers.]

**Mrs. Spelling.** Why, we love having you! I just hope your family aren't too anxious.

**John.** One of the GI's finally called them, said I was staying here for the weekend.

**9 Spelling.** The rest of our *lives*, if something isn't done soon.

**4**

**How might Kreton convince Ellen's father?** Could use force or, knowing father's thoughts, might use exclusive interview as bargaining play.

**5**

Kreton seems to consider humans childish and naive, easy to convince by a show of power.

**6**

Kreton, so sure of himself, cannot know that he will commit another error by getting the wrong president.

**7**

**Satire.** In the mid-fifties, atomic weapons were much feared. Many people bought "fallout shelters" to protect them from radiation from atomic bombs. This suggestion marks the speaker as naive. Vidal may be satirizing those willing to pursue an end at any cost.

**8**

**Characterization.** While members of the military are considering use of atomic weapons in the garden, these two are unchanged: Mrs. Spelling worries about garden, and Mr. Spelling worries about interviewing Kreton.

**9**

Comic exasperation at being unable to communicate with outside and at being stuck with John.

"advanced" race.

Kreton is able to do as he wills, it seems. He can read the minds of animals and humans, bring people from far places and send them back with just a flick of his hand, and make rifles float in the air all over the world.

Kreton is a tourist and a "philanthropist." He has come to visit Earth for curiosity and pleasure, for the "glorious excitement of . . . reveling in [man's] savagery." The "murder" in man's hearts "intoxicates" Kreton.

Kreton has no desire to eliminate war or to

bring about universal prosperity. As a "philanthropist," Kreton will encourage man to experience man's favorite pleasures, violence and war; Kreton wants the world to have a war, the biggest war ever. As he says, "It's the one thing your little race does well. . . . I myself will get a great

## 10

Ironic and comic response to someone who has just referred to her thoughts as "crude."

## 11

"Those" thoughts have become tiresome; Kreton will grant wishes so Speldings will quit bombarding him with same thoughts. Comic and indirect characterization of Speldings as rather shallow, single-minded people. Kreton felt same way toward "one level" thoughts of cat.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Students may enjoy writing an essay discussing and analyzing the author's attitude toward Laurent. They should decide whether the Secretary-General is to be admired, pitied, or laughed at. Students should base their answers upon interpretation of specific passages in the play.

**John.** Just how long do you think that'll be, Dad?

**Spelding.** Who knows?

[Kreton and Ellen enter.]

**Kreton.** Ah, how wonderful to see you again!

Let me catch my breath. . . . Oh, your minds!

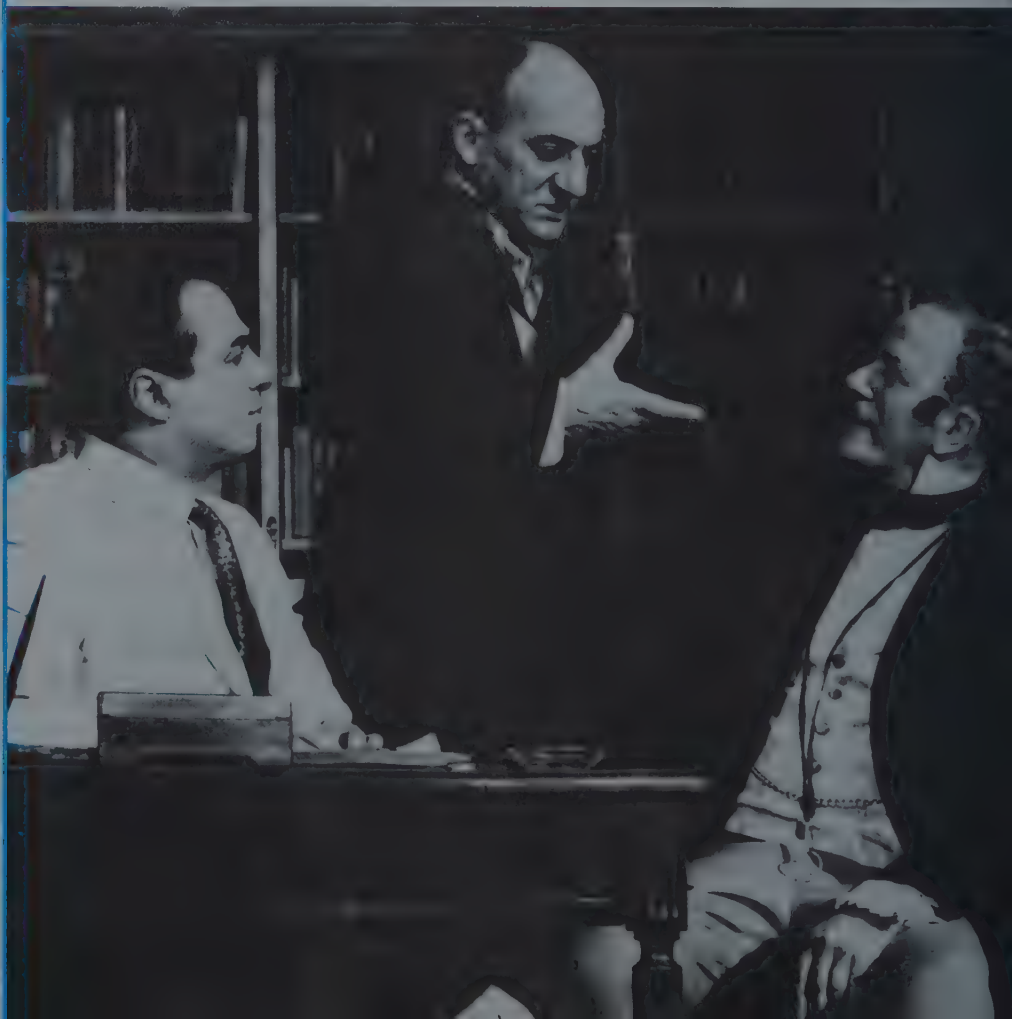
It's not easy for me, you know. So many crude thoughts blazing away! Yes, Mrs. Spelding, I will move the ship off your roses.

**10 Mrs. Spelding.** That's awfully sweet of you.

**Kreton.** Mr. Spelding, if any interviews are to be granted, you will be first. I promise you.

**Spelding.** That's very considerate, I'm sure.

**11 Kreton.** So you can stop thinking *those* particu-



deal of pleasure out of a war . . . but I'm doing it mostly for you" (p. 439).

Perceptive students may note that despite his great powers, Kreton has made errors. He has arrived in the wrong century, and he brings the President of Paraguay to talk with him, not the

President of the United States. Kreton is fallible. Some students may wish to discuss how his fallibility affects the satire of the play.

lar thoughts. And now where is the President?

**Spelding.** The President?

**Kreton.** Yes, I sent for him. He should be here. (*He goes to the terrace window.*) Ah, that must be he. (*A swarthy Man in uniform with a sash across his chest is standing, bewildered, on the terrace. Kreton opens the glass doors.*) Come in, sir, come

**12** in, Your Excellency. Good of you to come on such short notice.

[*Man enters.*]

**Man** (*in Spanish accent*). Where am I?

**Kreton.** You are the President, aren't you?

**Man.** Of course I am the President. What am I doing here? I was dedicating a bridge and I find myself . . .

**Kreton** (*aware of his mistake*). Oh, dear! Where was the bridge?

**Man.** Where do you think, you idiot, in Paraguay!

**13** **Kreton** (*to others*). I seem to've made a mistake. Wrong President. (*Gestures and the Man disappears.*) Seemed rather upset, didn't he?

**John.** You can make people come and go just like that?

**Kreton.** Just like that.

[*Powers looks into room from the study.*]

**Powers.** Good morning, Mr. Kreton. Could I see you for a moment?

**Kreton.** By all means. (*He crosses to the study.*)

**Spelding.** I believe I am going mad.

[*Cut to study. The Aide stands at attention while Powers addresses Kreton.*]

**Powers.** . . . and so we feel, the government of the United States feels, that this problem is too big for any one country; therefore we are turning the whole affair over to Paul Laurent, the

Secretary-General of the World Council.

**Kreton.** Very sensible, I should've thought of that myself.

**Powers.** Mr. Laurent is on his way here now. And I may add, Mr. Kreton, you've made me look singularly ridiculous.

**Kreton.** I'm awfully sorry. (*Pause*) No, you can't kill me.

**Powers.** You were reading my mind again.

**Kreton.** I can't really help it, you know. And **14** such black thoughts today, but intense, very intense.

**Powers.** I regard you as a menace.

**Kreton.** I know you do and I think it's awfully unkind. I do mean well.

**Powers.** Then go back where you came from and leave us alone.

**Kreton.** I'm afraid I can't do that just yet . . .

[*Phone rings; the Aide answers it.*]

**Aide.** He's outside? Sure, let him through. (*To Powers*) The Secretary-General of the World Council is here, sir.

**15** **Powers** (*to Kreton*). I hope you'll listen to him.

**Kreton.** Oh, I shall, of course. I love listening.

[*The door opens and Paul Laurent, middle-aged and serene, enters. Powers and his Aide stand at attention. Kreton goes forward to shake hands.*]

**Laurent.** Mr. Kreton?

**Kreton.** At your service, Mr. Laurent.

**Laurent.** I welcome you to this planet in the name of the World Council.

**Kreton.** Thank you, sir, thank you.

**Laurent.** Could you leave us alone for a moment, General?

**Powers.** Yes, sir.

[*Powers and Aide go. Laurent smiles at Kreton.*]

**12**

*In what way is Kreton's greeting an example of both verbal irony and dramatic irony?* It is verbal irony because President's visit on short notice was hardly voluntary, thus, not "good" of him. Dramatic irony because audience sees at once this is wrong president.

**13**

*Characterization.* Kreton has great powers and apparently comes from a very advanced race, but he makes mistakes just as humans do. Suggests his plans may be fallible too.

**14**

Kreton again uses colors to characterize thoughts, interpreting the murderous thoughts of Powers as "black."

**15**

Powers, thinking of Laurent as highest authority figure on Earth, is sure Kreton will heed requests from Secretary-General.



16

**Suspense.** Kreton does not lie but does withhold what he plans to do. Author maintains suspense by revealing Kreton's full intent only gradually.

17

**How is Laurent's mind different? Why is this so?** Kreton finds it difficult to read. Laurent is not single-minded like most. As a diplomat, he has strong mental control.

18

Kreton's "demonstration of strength." Disarming the world is ironic contrast to ultimate intentions.

19

**Satire.** Kreton's vision of world under his rule reveals view of human nature: selfish, inclined to empire-building, full of sensational, scandalous thoughts.

20

Unaware that Kreton wants to use world as toy and his powers for his own amusement, Laurent envisions golden age of universal peace and prosperity.

21

**Conflict.** Shocked at Laurent's idealistic vision, Kreton begins to reveal intentions: wants world's countries at war with each other.

**Laurent.** Shall we sit down?

**Kreton.** Yes, yes, I love sitting down. I'm afraid my manners are not quite suitable, yet.

[*They sit down.*]

**Laurent.** Now, Mr. Kreton, in violation of all the rules of diplomacy, may I come to the point?

**Kreton.** You may.

**Laurent.** Why are you here?

16 **Kreton.** Curiosity. Pleasure.

**Laurent.** You are a tourist then in this time and place?

**Kreton.** (*nods*). Yes. Very well put.

**Laurent.** We have been informed that you have extraordinary powers.

**Kreton.** By your standards, yes, they must seem extraordinary.

**Laurent.** We have also been informed that it is your intention to . . . to take charge of this world.

17 **Kreton.** That is correct. . . . What a remarkable mind you have! I have difficulty looking inside it.

**Laurent** (*laughs*). Patience. I've attended so many conferences. . . . May I say that your conquest of our world puts your status of tourist in a rather curious light?

**Kreton.** Oh, I said nothing about *conquest*.

**Laurent.** Then how else do you intend to govern? The people won't allow you to direct their lives without a struggle.

**Kreton.** But I'm sure they will if I ask them to.

**Laurent.** You believe you can do all this without, well, without violence?

**Kreton.** Of course I can. One or two demonstrations and I'm sure they'll do as I ask. (*Smiles*) Watch this.

[*Pause. Then shouting. Powers bursts into room.*]

**Powers.** Now what've you done?

**Kreton.** Look out the window, Your Excellency.

18 [*Laurent goes to window. A rifle floats by, followed by an alarmed Soldier.*]

Nice, isn't it? I confess I worked out a number of rather melodramatic tricks last night. Incidentally, all the rifles of the soldiers in all the world are now floating in the air. (*Gestures*) Now they have them back.

**Powers** (*to Laurent*). You see, sir, I didn't exaggerate in my report.

**Laurent** (*awed*). No, no, you certainly didn't.

**Kreton.** You were skeptical, weren't you?

**Laurent.** Naturally. But now I . . . now I think it's possible.

**Powers.** That this . . . this gentleman is going to run everything?

**Laurent.** Yes, yes I do. And it might be wonderful.

**Kreton.** You *are* more clever than the others. You begin to see that I mean only good.

**Laurent.** Yes, only good. General, do you realize what this means? We can have one government . . .

**Kreton.** With innumerable bureaus, and intrigue. . . .

**Laurent** (*excited*). And the world could be incredibly prosperous, especially if he'd help us with his superior knowledge.

19 **Kreton** (*delighted*). I will, I will. I'll teach you to look into one another's minds. You'll find it devastating but enlightening: all that self-interest, those *lurid* emotions . . .

20 **Laurent.** No more countries. No more wars . . .

21 **Kreton** (*startled*). Oh, but I like a lot of countries. Besides, at this stage of your development you're supposed to have lots of countries and lots of wars . . . innumerable wars . . .

**Laurent.** But you can help us change all that.

**Kreton.** *Change* all that! My dear sir, I am your friend.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to name the extraordinary things that Kreton has done and to evaluate whether he seems capable of ruling the world. Have them discuss any evidence in story that his view of humans is correct.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

During the mid-1950s, when this play was written, flying saucers and the atomic and hydrogen bombs were much in the news. Little was known of the long-term effects of atomic radiation, but "the bomb" inspired great fear.

Some students might report on American society in the mid-1950s. Popular magazines of the day, such as *McCalls*, *Life*, *Time*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*, and major newspapers, such as the *New York Times*, would be good sources for stories and articles.

**Laurent.** What do you mean?  
**22 Kreton.** Why, your deepest pleasure is violence. How can you deny that? It is the whole point to you, the whole point to my hobby . . . and you are my hobby, all mine.

**Laurent.** But our lives are devoted to *controlling* violence, and not creating it.

**23 Kreton.** Now, don't take me for an utter fool. After all, I can see into your minds. My dear fellow, don't you *know* what you are?

**Laurent.** What are we?

**Kreton.** You are savages. I have returned to the dark ages of an insignificant planet simply because I want the glorious excitement of being among you and *reveling* in your savagery! There is murder in all your hearts and I love it! It intoxicates me!

**Laurent** (*slowly*). You hardly flatter us.

**Kreton.** I didn't mean to be rude but you did ask me why I am here and I've told you.

**Laurent.** You have no wish then to . . . to help us poor savages.

**25 Kreton.** I couldn't even if I wanted to. You won't be civilized for at least two thousand years and you won't reach the level of my people for about a million years.

**Laurent** (*sadly*). Then you have come here only to . . . to observe?

**Kreton.** No, more than that. I mean to regulate your pastimes. But don't worry: I won't upset things too much. I've decided I don't want to be known to the people. You will go right on with your countries, your squabbles, the way you always have, while I will *secretly* regulate things through you.

**Laurent.** The World Council does not govern. We only advise.

**Kreton.** Well, I shall advise you and you will advise the governments and we shall have a lovely time.

**Laurent.** I don't know what to say. You obviously have the power to do as you please.

**Kreton.** I'm glad you realize that. Poor General

Powers is now wondering if a hydrogen bomb might destroy me. It won't, General.

**Powers.** Too bad.

**Kreton.** Now, Your Excellency, I shall stay in this house until you have laid the groundwork for my first project.

**Laurent.** And what is that to be?

**26 Kreton.** A war! I want one of your really splendid wars, with all the trimmings, all the noise and the fire . . .

**Laurent.** A war! You're joking. Why, at this moment we are working as hard as we know how *not* to have a war.

**Kreton.** But secretly you want one. After all, it's the one thing your little race does well. You'd hardly want me to *deprive* you of your simple pleasures, now would you?

**Laurent.** I think you must be mad.

**27 Kreton.** Not mad, simply a *philanthropist*. Of course I myself shall get a great deal of pleasure out of a war (the vibrations must be incredible!) but I'm doing it mostly for you. So, if you don't mind, I want you to arrange a few incidents, so we can get one started *spontaneously*.

**Laurent.** I refuse.

**Kreton.** In that event, I shall select someone else to head the World Council. Someone who *will* start a war. I suppose there exist a few people here who might like the idea.

**Laurent.** How can you do such a horrible thing to us? Can't you see that we don't want to be savages?

**Kreton.** But you have no choice. Anyway, you're just pulling my leg! I'm sure you want a war as much as the rest of them do and that's what you're going to get: the biggest war you've ever had!

**Laurent** (*stunned*). Heaven help us!

**Kreton** (*exuberant*). Heaven won't! Oh, what fun it will be! I can hardly wait! (*He strikes the globe of the world a happy blow as we fade out.*)

**22**

**Satire.** Another indictment of human race: Kreton says its "deepest pleasure is violence"—very reason humans are his hobby.

**23**

*Within the framework of the play, whom should the audience believe? Why?* Probably Kreton. He can see into men's minds. Outsider should be able to speak objectively. Although evasive, he has not lied, seems to have no reason to lie.

**24**

Kreton may seem insane, but trip shows he means what he says. If he did not see murder in mankind's heart, would not care to come.

**25**

May suggest motivation for Kreton's actions. His people are so civilized he finds them boring.

**26**

**Conflict.** Kreton's wish puts him in direct conflict with Laurent and with man's best interests.

**27**

**Irony.** This unusual use of *philanthropy* to mean "love of mankind" is accurate within Kreton's frame of reference. Also *verbal irony* that he will start war "mostly for you."

**28**

Cold War tensions and a recently ended conflict in Korea made atomic war a great fear in 1955.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the satire of the play, especially as it is revealed in Act Three. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## READING CHECK

1. By error, Kreton summons President of Paraguay but returns him home (p. 437).
2. Makes the rifles of world's soldiers float in the air (p. 438).
3. Look into each other's minds (p. 438).
4. Violence, murder, and war (p. 439).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Sympathizes with cat; finds her "bright red thoughts" exciting, amusing; plays with people as with pets.
2. He has great power but makes mistakes.
- 3a. Opinions may vary. Usually diplomats talk agreeably about many other subjects before carefully approaching point at issue.
- 3b. Laurent is quite experienced; thinks of many different subjects, including others' possible viewpoints.
- 4a. As World Council leader, Laurent desires world peace. He thinks Kreton has power to create one world government, to control violence.
- 4b. A war.
5. Kreton says, "After all, it's the one thing your little race does well."

## Act Three

**1**  
**Exposition.** This bit of dialogue is used to announce Powers' new position.

**2**  
Although Powers is not happy with circumstances, he has, for unknown reasons, agreed to work for Kreton.

**3**  
**Why does Powers think it fortunate other generals do not know of his job?** May think other generals would be more willing to help in destruction of world.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on textbook p. 446 gives students practice in using their knowledge of combining forms to analyze words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Is it possible for mankind to work together to prevent war, or is war an inevitable expression of man's nature? This play seems to imply that man could outgrow his tendency to try to solve disputes by waging war.

## Reading Check

1. What happens when Kreton decides to send for the President of the United States?
2. What demonstration does Kreton give to show the world his powers?
3. What does Kreton plan to teach people to do?
4. According to Kreton, what are the favorite "pastimes" of people on earth?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

1. Kreton converses with the cat almost as if he were conversing with a person. What is the significance of his remarks to the cat?
2. What two things does the incident with the President of Paraguay show us about Kreton's powers?
- 3a. What does the remark Laurent makes as he sits down with Kreton imply about the rules of diplomacy? **b.** Why does Kreton find it difficult to look into Laurent's mind?
- 4a. What benefits does Laurent at first see in Kreton's plan to dominate the world? **b.** What does Kreton's first project turn out to be?
5. Kreton states that the deepest pleasure for human beings is violence. What evidence does he give for his conclusion?

## Act Three

Fade in on *the study, two weeks later*. Kreton is sitting at desk on which a map is spread out. He has a pair of dividers, some models of jet aircraft. Occasionally he pretends to dive-bomb, imitating the sound of a bomb going off. Powers enters.

**Powers.** You wanted me, sir?

**Kreton.** Yes, I wanted those figures on radioactive fallout.

**Powers.** They're being made up now, sir. Anything else?

**Kreton.** Oh, my dear fellow, why do you dislike me so?

**1 Powers.** I am your military aide, sir: I don't have to answer that question. It is outside the sphere of my duties.

**Kreton.** Aren't you at least happy about your promotion?

**2 Powers.** Under the circumstances, no, sir.

**Kreton.** I find your attitude baffling.

**Powers.** Is that all, sir?

**Kreton.** You have never once said what you thought of my war plans. Not once have I got a single word of encouragement from you, a single compliment . . . only black thoughts.

**Powers.** Since you read my mind, sir, you know what I think.

**Kreton.** True, but I can't help but feel that deep down inside of you there is just a twinge of professional jealousy. You don't like the idea of an outsider playing your game better than you do. Now confess!

**Powers.** I am acting as your aide only under duress.

**Kreton (sadly).** Bitter, bitter . . . and to think I chose you especially as my aide. Think of all the other generals who would give anything to have your job.

**3 Powers.** Fortunately, they know nothing about my job.

**Kreton.** Yes, I do think it wise not to advertise my presence, don't you?

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 59 / Reading Check 34 / Vocabulary Test 22 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 50



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The third act opens two weeks later. General Powers has been promoted to the position of military aide to Kreton. Kreton is planning a sneak attack and intends to destroy several cities. The war will begin at midnight. John and Ellen

talk about what they might do to stop Kreton, but they realize that they are powerless. The attack will begin in fourteen minutes.

## PRESENTATION

Remind students of the definition of **satire**. Satire is a kind of writing that holds the weaknesses and wrongdoings of individuals, groups, institutions, or humanity in general up to ridicule or contempt.

**4 Powers.** I can't see that it makes much difference, since you seem bent on destroying our world.

**5 Kreton.** I'm not going to destroy it. A few dozen cities, that's all, and not very nice cities either. Think of the fun you'll have building new ones when it's over.

**Powers.** How many millions of people do you plan to kill?

**6 Kreton.** Well, quite a few, but they love this sort of thing. You can't convince me they don't. Oh, I know what Laurent says. But he's a misfit, out of step with his time. Fortunately, my new World Council is more reasonable.

**Powers.** Paralyzed is the word, sir.

**Kreton.** You don't think they like me either?

**Powers.** You *know* they hate you, sir.

**Kreton.** But love and hate are so confused in your savage minds and the vibrations of the one are so very like those of the other that I can't always distinguish. You see, we neither  
**7** love nor hate in my world. We simply have hobbies. (*He strokes the globe of the world tenderly.*)

But now to work. Tonight's the big night: first,  
**8** the sneak attack, then: boom! (*He claps his hands gleefully.*)

[Dissolve to *the living room, to John and Ellen.*]

**Ellen.** I've never felt so helpless in my life.

**John.** Here we all stand around doing nothing while he plans to blow up the world.

**Ellen.** Suppose we went to the newspapers.

**John.** He controls the press. When Laurent resigned they didn't even print his speech.

[*A gloomy pause*]

**Ellen.** What are you thinking about, John?

**John.** Walnuts.

[*They embrace.*]

**Ellen.** Can't we do anything?

**John.** No, I guess there's nothing.

**Ellen** (*vehemently*). Oh! I could kill him!

[*Kreton and Powers enter.*]

**Kreton.** Very good, Ellen, *very* good! I've never felt you so violent.

**Ellen.** You heard what I said to John?

**Kreton.** Not in words, but you were absolutely bathed in malevolence.

**Powers.** I'll get the papers you wanted, sir. (*Powers exits.*)

**Kreton.** I don't think he likes me very much  
**9** but your father does. Only this morning he offered to handle my public relations and I said I'd let him. Wasn't that nice of him?

**John.** I think I'll go get some fresh air. (*He goes out through the terrace door.*)

**Kreton.** Oh, dear! (*Sighs*) Only your father is really entering the spirit of the game. He's a much better sport than you, my dear.

**Ellen** (*exploding*). Sport! That's it! You think we're sport. You think we're animals to be played with: well, we're not. We're people and we don't want to be destroyed.

**Kreton** (*patiently*). But I am not destroying you. You will be destroying one another of your own free will, as you have always done. I am simply a . . . a k**ib**itzer.

**Ellen.** No, you are a vampire!

**Kreton.** A vampire? You mean I drink blood? Ugh!

**Ellen.** No, you drink emotions, our emotions. You'll sacrifice us all for the sake of your . . . your vibrations!

**Kreton.** Touché.<sup>1</sup> Yet what harm am I really doing? It's true I'll enjoy the war more than  
**10** anybody; but it will be *your* destructiveness, after all, not mine.

**Ellen.** You could stop it.

1. *Touché* (tōō-shā'): a French fencing term meaning "touched"; that is, "You have scored a point."

**4**

**Characterization.** Although Powers is somewhat ambitious and arrogant, he is still loyal to Earth and human race.

**5**

Kreton is unfeeling in discussion of plans to kill people and destroy cities.

**6**

Kreton, for all his powers, cannot comprehend that not all people are alike. Mind seems to work on one level, also like cat's.

**7**

*Is Kreton telling the truth about his world having neither love nor hate? How would Kreton fit into such a world?* Probably telling truth since civilization is so advanced. Yet, he is atypical; he seems to pursue his hobby with considerable passion and relish.

**8**

At end of Act One (p. 433), Kreton calls hosts "wicked children." Although he adopts paternal, condescending tone, he himself acts like wicked child.

**9**

**Characterization.** Spelding puts self-interest above everything else.

**10**

Kreton blames humans' destructiveness, conveniently ignoring stimulus for war-to-be: *his* desire for "vibrations."

Satire can be either gentle, witty, and amusing, or forceful, bitter, and even vicious. Ask students to determine whether the satire in *Visit to a Small Planet* is gentle or vicious.

Ask the students to point out the author's satiric targets. What personality types are being

satirized? What institutions are satirized? How are these institutions represented in the play?

Encourage students to evaluate Vidal's satire. How effective do the students consider the satire, and what do they think makes it effective or ineffective?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Although Kreton calls Ellen a savage because of her strong passions, he seems to like her. Using Kreton's own standards as a basis, could students make a case for calling Kreton a savage? A first step toward writing such a paper is to define Kreton's standards as they are expressed in his dialogue.

11

Though Kreton will initiate war, he makes it clear humankind could stop fighting if it wished.

12

Satire. Kreton emphasizes basic dishonesty of relationships in Ellen's family. In its mutual misunderstandings, Spelding family mirrors problems in society and in world.



**Kreton.** So could you.

**Ellen.** I?

**11 Kreton.** Your race. They could stop altogether but they won't. And I can hardly intervene in their natural development. The most I can do is help out in small, practical ways.

**Ellen.** We are not what you think. We're not so . . . so primitive.

**Kreton.** My dear girl, just take this one house-

**12** hold: your mother dislikes your father but she is too tired to do anything about it, so she knits and she gardens and she tries not to think about him. Your father, on the other hand, is bored with all of you. Don't look shocked; he doesn't like you any more than you like him . . .

**Ellen.** Don't say that!

**Kreton.** I am only telling you the truth. Your

father wants you to marry someone important; therefore he objects to John, while you, my girl . . .

**Ellen** (*with a fierce cry, Ellen grabs vase to throw*). You devil! (*Vase breaks in her hand*.)

**Kreton.** You see? That proves my point perfectly. (*Gently*) Poor savage, I cannot help what you are. (*Briskly*) Anyway, you will soon be distracted from your personal problems. Tonight is the night. If you're a good girl, I'll let you watch the bombing.

[Dissolve to study. Eleven forty-five. Powers and the Aide gloomily await the war.]

**Aide.** General, isn't there anything we can do?  
**Powers.** It's out of our hands.

14 [Kreton, dressed as a hussar<sup>2</sup> with shako,<sup>3</sup> enters.]

**Kreton.** Everything on schedule?

**Powers.** Yes, sir. Planes left for their targets at twenty-two hundred.

**Kreton.** Good . . . good. I, myself, shall take off shortly after midnight to observe the attack firsthand.

**Powers.** Yes, sir.

[Kreton goes into the living room, where the family is gloomily assembled.]

**Kreton** (*enters from study*). And now the magic hour approaches! I hope you're all as thrilled as I am.

16 **Spelding.** You still won't tell us who's attacking whom?

**Kreton.** You'll know in exactly . . . fourteen minutes.

**Ellen** (*bitterly*). Are we going to be killed too?

**Kreton.** Certainly not! You're quite safe, at least in the early stages of the war.

**Ellen.** Thank you.

**Mrs. Spelding.** I suppose this will mean rationing again.<sup>4</sup>

**Spelding.** Will . . . will we see anything from here?

**Kreton.** No, but there should be a good picture on the monitor in the study. Powers is tuning in right now.

17 **John** (*at window*). Hey look, up there! Coming this way!

[Ellen joins him.]

**Ellen.** What is it?

**John.** Why . . . it's *another* one! And it's going to land.

**Kreton** (*surprised*). I'm sure you're mistaken. No one would dream of coming here. (*He has gone to the window, too*.)

**Ellen.** It's landing!

**Spelding.** Is it a friend of yours, Mr. Kreton?

**Kreton** (*slowly*). No, no, not a friend . . . (*Kreton retreats to the study; he inadvertently<sup>5</sup> drops a lace handkerchief beside the sofa*.)

**John.** Here he comes.

**Ellen** (*suddenly bitter*). Now we have two of them.

18 **Mrs. Spelding.** My poor roses.

[The new Visitor enters in a gleam of light from his ship. He is wearing a most futuristic costume. Without a word, he walks past the awed family into the study. Kreton is cowering behind the globe. Powers and the Aide stare, bewildered, as the Visitor gestures sternly and Kreton reluctantly removes shako and sword. They communicate by odd sounds.]

4. **rationing again:** Mrs. Spelding is remembering World War II, when gasoline and food consumption were restricted in the United States.

5. **inadvertently** (in'əd-vûr'tənt-lē): through an oversight.

13

**Plot.** Kreton reveals when sneak attack will begin greatest war world has known.

14

**Characterization.** By donning a costume that he thinks is suitable for role that he is playing, Kreton shows childish nature.

15

Repeated references to time heighten tension as hour of attack nears.

16

Mr. Spelding still looking for news scoop.

17

**Turning point.** John once again spots arriving spacecraft. Occupant of this vessel changes course of plot.

18

**Satire.** Mrs. Spelding's concerns still self-centered despite imminent catastrophe.

19

Kreton fears and obeys new visitor. He is like child with angry parent.

2. **hussar** (höö-zär'): a European cavalry soldier in a brightly colored uniform.

3. **shako** (shāk'ō): a fancy, cylindrical military hat with a plume on top.



20

**Resolution.** Second visitor confirms what Kreton said, that Earth is "the dark ages," but also reveals ironically that Kreton and he are descendants of Earth's people.

21

The second visitor stops the war, saving the world. Such an element introduced into play to provide happy ending when a catastrophe might be more natural outcome of action is called *deus ex machina*.

22

**Characterization.** Kreton's childish behavior explained.

23

*In what way is Kreton a "child" and morally retarded? What do these labels imply about human beings?* Answers will vary. Most will say author's satire is implying, by analogy, that humans who enjoy war and violence are also retarded.

24

For childlike Kreton, future no doubt would seem dull.

**Visitor** (to Powers). Please leave us alone.

[Cut to living room as Powers and the Aide enter from the study.]

**Powers** (to Ellen). Who on earth was that?

**Ellen.** It's another one, another visitor.

**Powers.** Now we're done for.

**Ellen.** I'm going in there.

**Mrs. Spelding.** Ellen, don't you dare!

**Ellen.** I'm going to talk to them. (*Starts to door*)

**John.** I'm coming, too.

**Ellen** (*grimly*). No, alone. I know what I want to say.

[Cut to interior of the study, to Kreton and the other Visitor as Ellen enters.]

**Ellen.** I want you both to listen to me . . .

**Visitor.** You don't need to speak. I know what you will say.

**Ellen.** That you have no right here? That you mustn't . . .

**Visitor.** I agree. Kreton has no right here. He is well aware that it is forbidden to interfere with the past.

**Ellen.** The past?

20 **Visitor** (*nods*). You are the past, the dark ages: we are from the future. In fact, we are *your* descendants on another planet. We visit you from time to time but we never interfere because it would change *us* if we did. Fortunately, I arrived in time.

**Ellen.** There won't be a war?

21 **Visitor.** There will be no war. And there will be no memory of any of this. When we leave here you will forget Kreton and me. Time will turn back to the moment before his arrival.

**Ellen.** Why did you want to hurt us?

**Kreton** (*heartbroken*). Oh, but I didn't! I only wanted to have . . . well, to have a little fun, to indulge my hobby . . . against the rules, of course.

22 **Visitor** (to Ellen). Kreton is a rarity among us. Mentally and morally he is retarded. He is a child and he regards your period as his toy.

**Kreton.** A child, now really!

**Visitor.** He escaped from his nursery and came back in time to you . . .

**Kreton.** And *everything* went wrong, everything! I wanted to visit 1860 . . . that's my *real* period but then something happened to the car and I ended up here, not that I don't find you nearly as interesting but . . .

**Visitor.** We must go, Kreton.

**Kreton** (to Ellen). You did like me just a bit, didn't you?

**Ellen.** Yes, yes, I did, until you let your hobby get out of hand. (*To Visitor*) What is the future like?

**Visitor.** Very serene, very different . . .

24 **Kreton.** Don't believe him: it is dull, dull, dull beyond belief! One simply floats through eternity: no wars, no excitement . . .

**Visitor.** It is forbidden to discuss these matters.

**Kreton.** I can't see what difference it makes, since she's going to forget all about us anyway.

**Ellen.** Oh, how I'd love to see the future . . .

**Visitor.** It is against . . .

**Kreton.** Against the rules: how tiresome you are. (*To Ellen*) But, alas, you can never pay us a call because you aren't born yet! I mean where we are you are not. Oh, Ellen, dear, think kindly of me, until you forget.

**Ellen.** I will.

**Visitor.** Come. Time has begun to turn back. Time is bending.

[*He starts to door. Kreton turns conspiratorially to Ellen.*]

**Kreton.** Don't be sad, my girl. I shall be back one bright day, but a bright day in 1860. I dote on the Civil War, so exciting . . .

**Visitor.** Kreton!

**Kreton.** Only next time I think it'll be more fun if the *South* wins! (*He hurries after the Visitor.*)

**25** [Cut to clock as the hands spin backwards. Dissolve to the living room, exactly the same as the first scene: Spelding, Mrs. Spelding, Ellen.]

**Spelding.** There is nothing wrong with marrying a wealthy man. The horror of it has always eluded me. However, my only wish is that you marry someone hard-working, ambitious, a man who'll make his mark in the world. Not a boy who is content to sit on a farm all his life, growing peanuts . . .

**Ellen.** English walnuts! And he won't just sit there.

**Spelding.** Will you stop contradicting me?

**Ellen.** But, Daddy, John grows walnuts . . .

**26** [John enters.]

**John.** Hello, everybody.

**Mrs. Spelding.** Good evening, John.

**Ellen.** What kept you, darling? You missed Daddy's broadcast.

**John.** I saw it before I left home. Wonderful broadcast, sir.

**Spelding.** Thank you, John.

[John crosses to window.]

**John.** That meteor you were talking about, well, for a while it looked almost like a spaceship or something. You can just barely see it now.

[Ellen joins him at window. They watch, arms about one another.]

**Spelding.** Spaceship! Nonsense! Remarkable what some people will believe, *want* to believe.

Besides, as I said in the broadcast: if there's any traveling to be done in space, we'll do it first.

**27** [*He notices Kreton's handkerchief on sofa and picks it up. They all look at it, puzzled, as we cut to stock shot of the starry night, against which two spaceships vanish in the distance, one serene in its course, the other erratic, as we fade out.*]

### Reading Check

1. What position does Powers now hold?
2. What motive does Kreton ascribe to Powers?
3. What is due to happen at midnight?
4. How are the beings of Kreton's world related to the people on earth?

**25**

Framing central story of Kreton's arrival and departure with nearly identical scenes gives reader ironic perspective on action.

**26**

How does John's entrance differ from that in earlier similar scene? In earlier scene, entered "breathlessly" after seeing spaceship.

**27**

Irony. Everything goes on as would have; only audience's consciousness is altered.

### READING CHECK

1. Military aide to Kreton (p. 440).
2. Professional jealousy (p. 440).
3. A sneak bombing attack to destroy a few dozen cities (p. 441).
4. They are descendants of earth people. If they interfere with the past, they will change what happens to them (p. 444).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

**1a.** Powers is Kreton's military aide despite not liking Kreton's plans. Laurent would not help Kreton and was replaced. **1b.** He wants no opposition to war plans.

**2a.** When Ellen sees Kreton plans to cause war for his enjoyment, her attitude changes from interest and admiration to horror and hatred. **2b.** Spelding is opportunist, news reporter; Kreton is making news.

**3a.** Mrs. Spelding dislikes husband. Mr. Spelding bored with family, wants Ellen to marry important man, not John. Ellen calls Kreton a devil, confirming his belief she is savage. **3b.** Love. Says hate and love are "so confused in your savage minds and the vibrations of the one are so very like those of the other that I can't always distinguish" (p. 441).

**4a.** Kreton has disobeyed his society's rules; acts like child; regards Earth people as toys. **4b.** According to Visitor, his people, of the future, are descendants of Earth people. His people do not interfere with Earth; changes on Earth would change them.

**5.** Handkerchief cannot be explained. Time has been turned back, so Spelding and others forget visitors, but he cannot explain handkerchief. A sign that something did happen.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

**1. *Interfaith*** conference: conference between religious faiths. ***Intercollegiate*** football game: football game between colleges. ***Interplanetary*** mission: mission from one planet to another. ***Interdepartmental*** meeting: meeting between departments.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

**1a.** What difference is there in the way Laurent and General Powers react to Kreton's plans? **b.** Why does Kreton keep Paul Laurent's speech from appearing in the press?

**2a.** How and why does Ellen's attitude toward Kreton change? **b.** Why is it logical that Mr. Spelding wants to work for Kreton, now that Kreton is in command?

**3.** Kreton's speech about the Spelding household is a key speech in the play. **a.** What primitive anger does he see in each family member? **b.** Which human capacity does he dismiss?

**4a.** What does the Visitor mean when he says that Kreton is morally retarded? **b.** Why is it forbidden for the visitors to interfere with what happens on Earth?

**5.** Why is Kreton's forgotten handkerchief crucial to the ending of the play?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Using Combining Forms

Many words have been created by combining older words or word fragments. Often it is possible to figure out the original meaning of a word simply by separating it into parts—provided you know what the parts mean.

*inter-*

**John.** Traveling in space! Just like those stories. You know: intergalactic drive stuff.

*Inter-* is a prefix meaning "between or among." Therefore, *intergalactic* travel means "travel between galaxies." What is an *interfaith* conference? An *intercollegiate* football game? An *interplanetary* mission? An *interdepartmental* meeting?

*mal-*

**Kreton.** . . . you were absolutely bathed in malevolence.

*Mal-* is a combining form meaning "bad or badly, wrong or ill." The remainder of the word *malevolence* is related to the word *voluntary*. A voluntary action is something you do because you wish to do it or have a will to do it.

**2** Therefore, *malevolence* is ill will. What is *malnutrition*? What does *malodorous* mean? What is a *malfunction*? What is *malpractice*?

*philo-* and *anthropo-*

**Laurent.** I think you must be mad.

**Kreton.** Not mad, simply a philanthropist.

You probably know that a philanthropist is a giver of charity. In the quotation above, Kreton means more than that.

*Philo-* (*phil-* before a vowel) means "loving or liking."

*Anthropo* (*anthrop-* before a vowel) means "human."

A philanthropist, therefore, is a lover of human beings.

**3** Use your dictionary to find out what the second part of each of the following words means. You will find the answers in the derivation entries for the words in question, not in the definitions. You may have to do some cross-referencing. Read the definitions after you have found the answers.

anthropocentric  
anthropology  
anthropometry  
anthropomorphism

philharmonic  
Philip  
philology  
philosophy



## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify the satirical targets of this play and to compare the ways in which characters react to Kreton's plans and strategies.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

The ending of *Visit to a Small Planet* does not resolve the **conflicts** introduced in the play through the actions of the characters already present. Instead, the plot conflicts are resolved by the intervention of a new character.

Originally, Vidal intended to end the play with the entire world blowing up. Students may enjoy developing an ending which resolves the conflict of the play without introducing an outside force or character such as the second visitor.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Analyzing Satirical Elements

A **satire** is a literary work that points up or attacks follies or vices in human nature. Satire can range in tone from lighthearted wit to scorching ironic bitterness. Almost all comic writers use some satirical elements in their work.

Choose one of the following aspects of Vidal's satire for analysis, and develop a short paper, using evidence from the play to support your conclusions.

What are some examples of hypocrisy that occur in the play? Why is Kreton particularly suited to expose them?

Kreton tends to emphasize the negative rather than the positive aspects of humanity. Are his observations useful, destructive, or both? Apply your answer to satire in general as you elaborate.

Gore Vidal's original plan when he was writing *Visit to a Small Planet* was to end the play with the entire world blowing up. Which ending better suits the satirical points that the author has to make? Explain.

## About the Author

### Gore Vidal (1926– )



Vidal turned to television writing for his livelihood. *Visit to a Small Planet* was first telecast on May 8, 1955. Vidal later rewrote the teleplay for Broadway, where it had a long run.

Since 1967, when *Washington, D.C.* appeared, Vidal has written a series of novels about American history and politics: *Burr* (1973), *1876* (1976), *Lincoln* (1984), and *Empire* (1987).

Gore Vidal wrote his first novel at the age of nineteen. This was during the Second World War; Vidal was first mate of an army ship. His first few novels were successful, but from 1954 to 1956,

2. **Malnutrition:** poor nutrition.

**Malodorous:** stinking.

**Malfunction:** failure to work properly.

**Malpractice:** negligent, improper practice.

3. **Anthropocentric** (-centric = center): viewing human beings or values as center of universe.

**Anthropology** (-logy = study or science): study of humans' physical and cultural history.

**Anthropometry** (-metry = measure): science of comparative measurement of differences in human beings.

**Anthropomorphism** (-morph = form): seeing all things, beings in relation to human qualities.

**Philharmonic** (-harmonic = harmony): loving musical harmony.

**Philip** (-hippo = horse): loving horses.

**Philology** (-logy = words): love of words.

**Philosophy** (-sophy = knowledge, thought): love of wisdom.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

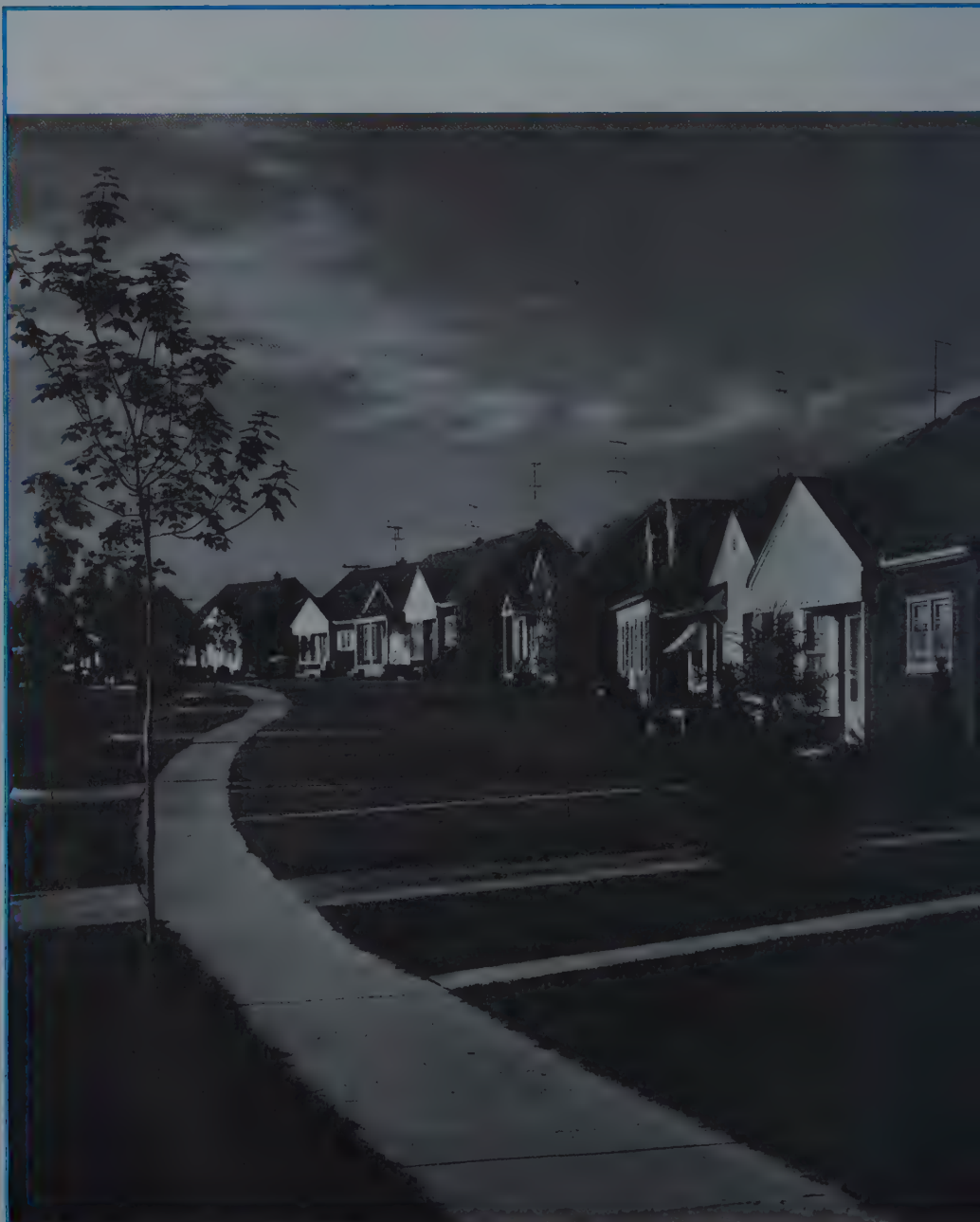
It might help students to get in small groups (according to topic) and discuss one example before writing. Students should be reminded there are various kinds of hypocrisy. Some kinds of hypocrisy may actually help people get along together in society, while other kinds lead to problems for all. Most students will have no trouble analyzing why Kreton, an outsider who reads minds, is suited to expose hypocrisies. Opinions of satire's value will vary but should be based on specific examples. Most students will like the present ending because it is happy but does warn of what could occur.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Though many housing developments contain similar or even identical houses, they do not contain identical people. What happens in *Thunder on Sycamore Street* could have happened on this suburban street in Anytown, USA—or anywhere else where people do not respect others' individual rights.

After students have read the play, some may want to write essays about situations in their neighborhoods that involve people or events not readily accepted by the majority of neighborhood residents. Essays should focus on the problem and how it was or was not resolved. Situations could include new families in the neighborhood, complaints over noise or traffic, and pets that create problems.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to draw inferences about the Morrison family from their words and actions. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. You might ask students to notice Frank's use of slang. What might the students infer about Frank's character from his speech?

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask the students how they view conformity. To what extent is it good to be like those around us? At what point should people decide to differ from those around them? *Thunder on Sycamore Street* deals with these issues.

# Thunder on Sycamore Street

**REGINALD ROSE**

*Something important is about to happen on Sycamore Street. As you read this suspenseful television play, you will gradually discover what that something is and how it tests several people's courage and convictions.*

## Characters

Frank Morrison	Joseph Blake
1 Clarice Morrison	Anna Blake
Roger Morrison	Judy Blake
Christopher Morrison	Mrs. Blake
Arthur Hayes	Charlie Denton
Phyllis Hayes	Mrs. Carson
Mr. Harkness	

## Act One

Fade in on a long shot of Sycamore Street in the pleasant and tidy village of Eastmont. It is 6:40 P.M. and just getting dark. We see three houses, modest but attractive, side by side, each an exact replica of the other. Each has a tiny front lawn and a tree or two in front of it. Each has been lived in and cared for by people who take pride in their own hard-won respectability. The street is quiet. Walking toward the houses now we see Arthur Hayes, a quiet, bespectacled man between thirty-five and thirty-eight years of age. He lives in the second of the three houses. He walks slowly, carrying a newspaper under his arm and smoking a pipe. He stops in front of his house and, almost in a daze, knocks the dottle<sup>1</sup> out of his pipe against

his heel. As he is doing this, we see Frank Morrison enter, also carrying a newspaper. He is a heavy man, forceful and aggressive, with a loud voice and a hearty laugh. He is about forty years of age. Frank Morrison lives right next door to Arthur in the first of the three houses. He sees Arthur and waves.

**Frank** (jovially). Hey, Artie. How ya doin'?

[Arthur is preoccupied. He doesn't register at first. He looks blankly at Frank.]

**Frank** (laughing). Hey . . . wake up, boy. It's almost time for supper.

[Arthur snaps out of it and forces a smile.]

**Arthur** (quietly). Oh . . . hello, Frank. Sorry, I didn't see you.

**Frank**. Didn't see me? Hey, wait till I tell Clarice. That diet she's got me on must be working. You have to look twice to see me! (Laughing hard, Frank reaches for his keys.) That's a hot one! (Arthur smiles weakly.) Say . . . isn't

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote emphasizes suspense. Ask the students to note the tactics the playwright employs to create and maintain suspense.

## Thunder on Sycamore Street

After students have read the play, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding class discussion of the characters' motivations and the theme.

## Act One

1 Little-known actors were cast in first TV production. Rose wanted to emphasize play's message and to show that situations in play can happen to anyone.

2 **Setting.** Similarity of three houses symbolizes social and economic status. Also symbolizes pressures for conformity.

3 **What is the symbolic significance of the position of Arthur Hayes's house?** Arthur lives between Frank Morrison and Joe Blake. Arthur must decide to go with group (Frank) or against group (Joe).

4 **Characterization.** Frank is big, loud, and blustery.Laughs at own jokes and seems slightly contemptuous of Arthur.

1. **dottle** (döt'l): tobacco ash.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 60 / Selection Test 41 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 51 / Reading Check 35



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

At 6:40 p.m., Frank Morrison meets his neighbor Arthur Hayes in front of Arthur's house. They speak about an event to occur at 7:15 p.m. in which the whole block will participate. As Joe Blake walks by, Frank watches with hatred.

5

Tonight will be important for both men, but for different reasons.

6

Joe Blake is their neighbor. It seems strange that he is not greeted and does not greet them.

7

**Plot.** Frank's hatred for Joe Blake arouses **suspense**. No explanation is given for his hatred.

8

Christopher's "Dr. Dentons" are one-piece sleeper pajamas.

9

**What does behavior of Christopher and Roger suggest?** Combat seems to be way of life in Morrison home.

10

**Characterization.** Frank's behavior seems childish even to sons. Apparently he encourages play that involves combat.

## PRESENTATION

If time permits, assign parts to your students. Have the students read the play aloud in one class period, setting aside the next class day for in-depth discussion. If all three acts cannot be completed in one period, you might assign Act

Three for reading at home.

Direct students' attention to the structure of the play. The play's structure shapes the audience's first reactions to the **characters**. Your students may wish to discuss their reactions and analyze how those reactions are related to the

this late for you to be getting home?

**Arthur.** No, I don't think so. (*He looks at his watch.*) It's twenty to seven. I always get home about this time.

5 **Frank.** Yeah. Well I wouldn't want you to be late tonight. You know what tonight is, don't you?

**Arthur** (*slowly*). Yes, I know what tonight is.

**Frank** (*a little hard*). Good.

[*We hear footsteps and see a man walk by them. He is Joseph Blake, a man in his late thirties, a big, powerful, but quiet man. Joseph Blake lives in the third*

6 *house on the street. As he walks by them, they both look at him silently. Arthur turns away then, but*

7 *Frank continues to stare at him. Camera moves in on Frank as he stares coldly at Joseph Blake. His face is hard, full of hatred. The footsteps recede.*]

**Frank** (*low*). See you later, Artie.

[*Frank turns and fits the key into the lock. There is utter silence. He fumbles with the lock, then silently swings the door open. He walks into the small foyer. The living room ahead is brightly lighted, but we see no one. Frank walks slowly, silently into the living room. As he enters it, we hear a dozen pistol shots. Frank stiffens, clutches himself and falls to the floor as if dead. Then we hear a chorus of shrill screams and two small boys wearing cowboy hats and carrying pistols fling themselves upon Frank's body. Frank doesn't move as they clamber over him. One is*

Roger, age ten; the other is Christopher, age six.

8 *Christopher wears "Dr. Dentons."<sup>22</sup>*]

**Christopher** (*screaming*). I got him! I got him first.

**Roger.** You did not!

**Christopher.** I did so! Get offa him. I got him first. (*Calling*) Hey, Mom . . .

**Roger** (*superior*). Boy, are you stupid! I got him three times before you even pulled the trigger.

2. "**Dr. Dentons**": a sleeping outfit.

**Christopher** (*squeaking*). What d'ya mean? I got him before you even—(*Roger tries to push Christopher off Frank's motionless body.*) Before you even—(*Christopher grunts and fights back.*) Cut it out! Hey, Mom . . .

[*Clarice, Frank's wife, a pleasant-looking woman in her early thirties, comes to living-room door from kitchen. She wears an apron. She calls out before she sees them.*]

**Clarice.** Now you boys stop that noise. (*She sees Roger pushing Christopher.*) Roger!

**Christopher.** Cut it out, willya. I got him—

**Clarice.** Roger! Stop that pushing. . . .

**Christopher.** I'm gonna sock you. . . .

**Clarice** (*angrily*). Christopher, don't you dare! Frank! Will you do something . . . please!

9 **Roger.** Go ahead. Sock me. You couldn't hurt a flea!

**Christopher** (*winding up*). Who says so?

**Roger.** Boy, you must be deaf. I said so!

**Clarice:** Frank!

[*As Christopher swings at Roger, Frank suddenly comes to life with a tremendous roar. He rolls over, toppling both boys to the floor and with lightning swiftness he grabs both of their cap pistols. He stands up grinning. They both look at him, startled.*]

10 **Frank** (*barking*). Get up! (*They both do, slowly.*) Get your hands up! (*They look at each other.*)

Make it snappy if you don't want to draw lead. (*Christopher shrugs and raises his hands.*) (*To Roger*) You too, hombre!

**Roger.** Aaaah, Dad . . .

**Frank.** Last warning.

**Roger** (*disgusted*). Come on . . . (*Frank shoots him with the cap pistol.*) What are you so serious about?

[*He walks away. Frank watches him, still not giving up the cowboy pose.*]

play's structure.

One of the students' reactions will surely be a mixture of curiosity and suspense. **Suspense** is created from the beginning of the first act by withholding information about the event that is to occur and by stressing the time factor.

The three acts cover roughly the same period of time. The difference from one act to the next arises in the perspective from which the audience perceives the **characters**. That perspective changes as the audience gains more information about the event and the characters. The chrono-

logical paralleling of the acts encourages the audience to compare and evaluate the three major characters, their motivations, and basic social outlooks.

**11 Clarice.** All right. Now that's enough gunplay. All three of you can just settle down. (To Frank) Hand 'em over.

*[He grins and gives her the guns. Then he bends over and kisses her.]*

**Frank.** Hello, honey.

**12** *[She kisses him dutifully, then speaks to Roger, 15 handing him the guns.]*

**Clarice.** Put these in your room and come back with your hands washed. We're sitting down to supper right now.

**Roger** (*desperately*). Right now? I gotta watch "Rangebusters."

**13 Clarice.** Not tonight. I told you we were eating early.

**Roger.** Ah, Mom . . . please . . .

**Clarice.** Absolutely not. Come on, now. In-side . . .

*[Roger slumps off. Clarice turns to Christopher as Frank begins to take off his coat.]*

**Clarice.** And you're going to bed, mister.

**Christopher.** No! I can't go to bed!

**Clarice.** Christopher!

**Christopher** (*backing away*). I'm not tired yet. Honest!

*[Frank is hanging his coat up in the foyer. Clarice advances toward Chris, who looks for means of escape.]*

**Clarice.** I'm not going to argue with you.

**Christopher.** Mom, fifteen minutes. Come on. Please . . .

**Clarice.** I'm going to start counting. One, two—

**14 Christopher** (*fast*). Three four five six seven eight nine ten.

*[He runs away from her, but right into the arms of Frank, who picks him up.]*

**Frank.** Trapped! Let's go, pal.

**Christopher.** Aaah . . .

*[Frank carries him past Clarice, who kisses him on the way by. As they reach the door which leads into bedroom, Roger comes out. Christopher, in his father's arms, raps Roger on the head with his knuckle.]*

**Roger.** Hey!

**Christopher** (*grinning*). Good night, Rog.

**Roger.** Stupid!

**Frank.** All right, now. That's enough out of both of you. I don't want to hear another peep.

*[Frank takes Christopher into bedroom. Camera follows Roger over to a dining table set at one end of living room near a picture window. This would probably be an L-shaped living room-dining room set-up and would be exactly the same in all three houses. The only difference in the three interior sets will be the way in which they are decorated. There are dishes on the table, glassware, etc. Roger slumps into his chair and takes a piece of bread. He munches on it as Clarice comes in from kitchen carrying a steaming bowl of stew. She sets it down and sits down.]*

**Clarice** (*calling*). Frank.

**Frank** (*off*). Okay. I'll be right there.

**16 Roger.** Hey, Mom, what are we eating so early for?

**Clarice** (*serving*). Don't say "Hey, Mom."

**Roger.** Well, what are we eating so early for?

**Clarice.** Because we feel like eating early. (*Calling*) Frank!

*[Frank walks in, loosening his tie.]*

**Frank.** What's for supper?

**11** *What is implied by Clarice's reaction? "Gunplay" is regular, rowdy play in house.*

**12** *Connotation. Dutifully suggests that indifferent, unemotional, routine habit is part of husband-wife relationship.*

**13** *Event planned for evening has upset household routine. Roger will not be able to watch favorite TV program, which sounds full of more "gunplay."*

**14** *Typical childish defiance.*

**15** *Christopher is in protected position, safe from retaliation. A realistic touch.*

**16** *Suspense. Roger's questioning maintains suspense about evening.*

17

**Suspense.** Another vague reference to what will happen tonight. Frank's anxiety about sitter shows how eagerly he awaits event.

18

**Exposition.** Frank does not criticize kids for dumping garbage on Blakes' lawn. Roger has done it before.

19

Frank is impatient, perhaps apprehensive.

20

**Why do Frank and Clarice not want the children to know about their evening plans?** Responses will vary. Clarice may want to shield children from real-life hostile situation. Later, Frank is not concerned about children's exposure to such reality.

21

Frank's anger at Roger's question spoils dinner atmosphere.

22

Again, Frank's worrying about time and sitter heightens suspense.

**Clarice.** Beef stew.

**Roger.** Look, if I could see the first five minutes of "Rangebusters"—

[Clarice ladles out the stew as Frank sits at the table.]

**Clarice.** Roger, I'm not going to tell you again.

**Roger** (*anguished*). But Mom, you don't know what's happening. There's this sneaky guy—

**Frank.** Come on, boy, dig into your dinner.

[Roger makes a face and gives up the battle.]

17 **Frank** (*to Clarice*). What time is the sitter coming?

**Clarice.** Ten after seven. Do you know that's the third time today you've asked me.

**Frank.** Just want to be sure.

**Clarice.** I don't see why they have to make it so early anyway.

[Frank has a mouthful of food, so he shrugs.]

**Roger.** Make what so early, Dad?

**Clarice.** Nothing. Eat your dinner.

**Frank.** Good stew.

**Clarice.** There's plenty more.

**Frank** (*chewing*). Mmmm. Hmmm. Do anything special today, Rog?

**Roger.** Nope. Just kinda hung around.

**Frank.** Well, I don't know why you don't get out and do something. A boy your age . . .

18 **Roger.** Some of the kids dumped garbage on the Blakes' lawn again.

**Frank** (*casually*). That so? What about you?

**Roger.** Ah, what fun is that after you do it a couple of times?

**Frank** (*chewing*). Mmmm. Hey, how about eating your stew.

**Roger.** I'm not hungry.

**Clarice.** Frank, I wish you'd do something about that boy's eating. He's beginning to look like a scarecrow.

**Frank.** He'll be all right. What time is it?

**Clarice** (*looking at watch*). Five of seven.

19 **Frank.** We'd better snap it up.

**Clarice.** Plenty of time. I'm leaving the dishes till later.

**Frank.** Y'know, Clarry, this really ought to be something tonight.

[Roger starts to get up, but stops.]

**Roger.** What ought to be something?

20 **Clarice.** You just sit down and pay attention to your dinner. There's a glass of milk to be finished before you get up.

**Roger** (*grudgingly*). Okay. (*He sips the milk for a moment.*) Where are you going tonight, Dad?

**Frank.** We're going for a little walk.

**Roger.** Well, what d'ya have to go out so early for?

**Frank.** Just like that.

**Roger** (*aggressively*). Well, what the heck is the big secret, that's what I'd like to know. Everybody's acting so mysterious.

21 **Frank** (*sharply*). That's enough. Now I don't want to hear any more questions out of you. Your mother and I have some business to attend to, and that's it. You mind yours.

[Roger, stunned, looks at his father, then down at his plate. There is an awkward silence. Frank eats stolidly. They watch him.]

22 **Frank** (*to Clarice*). Where's that sitter?

**Clarice.** It's not time yet. Take it easy, Frank.

[Frank gets up from the table, goes over to a box of cigars on top of the TV set, and lights one. Clarice and Roger watch him silently.]

**Clarice.** Aren't you going to have some des-





## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

In this picture, Frank Morrison tells Roger, "It's about time you learned some respect . . ."

Students may want to write essays discussing the kind of respect Roger is likely to learn from his father. They should base their arguments on evidence from the play.

sert, Frank? There's some cherry pie left.

**Frank.** I'll have it later.

*[He puffs on the cigar.]*

**Roger** *(low)*. I'm sorry, Dad.

**23 Frank** *(turning)*. Well, it's about time you learned some respect, d'you hear me? If I want you to know something I'll tell it to you.

**Roger** *(softly)*. Okay . . .

**24 Clarice** *(quickly)*. Have some pie, honey. I heated it special.

*[Frank goes to the table and sits down. He puts the cigar down and Clarice begins to cut him some pie.]*

**Clarice.** How late do you think we'll be, Frank?

**Frank.** I don't know.

**Clarice.** Do you think I ought to pack a ther-

**23**

**Irony.** What Frank has planned for evening makes his lecture on "respect" seem ironic. He seems to think that respect means passive obedience.

**24**

Clarice tries to prevent further damage to family atmosphere and further injury to Roger's feelings.

25

**Plot.** First indication that to-night's event will involve confrontation.

26

To Frank, event so important that he made a customer wait while he discussed it with Charlie.

27

Charlie Denton's figuring does not include Blake family. They are not part of "Every family on the block."

28

**Characterization.** Frank speaks as if he were an expert in "these things."

29

No one has to say who "she" is or who "he" is. "He" and "she" have been topic of much talk.

30

Frank likes to think of himself as man of action.

31

**What does Frank mean by "pussyfooting"?** Responses will vary. Frank speaks critically. Probably he means talk that is indecisive because people try to consider all possibilities and consequences before acting.

32

Frank seems to define *man* as one who takes decisive action.

mos of hot coffee? It's going to be chilly.

**Frank.** Might not be a bad idea.

[Frank now begins to show the first signs of being excited about the evening. He speaks, almost to himself.]

25 **Frank.** Boy, I can't wait till I see his face. The nerve of him. The absolute nerve. (*Grinning.*) What d'you think he'll do when we all—

**Clarice** (*looking at Roger*). Frank . . .

**Frank** (*as Roger stares*). Oh, yeah, go ahead, Rog. You can turn on your program.

**Roger.** Gee thanks, Dad.

[He jumps up, goes to the TV set and turns it on. Frank and Clarice watch him get settled in front of TV set. We hear dialogue from set faintly. Roger watches in background, enraptured.]

**Frank** (*quietly*). What are they saying on the block?

**Clarice.** I didn't speak to anyone. I was ironing all day.

**Frank.** Charlie Denton called me at the office. I was right in the middle of taking an order from Martin Brothers for three A-81 tractors.

**Clarice.** Three? Frank, that's wonderful!

26 **Frank.** Not bad. Anyway, I made Mr. Martin wait while I spoke to Charlie. Charlie says it's

27 gonna be one hundred percent. Every family on the block. He just called to tell me that.

**Clarice.** Well, that's good. Everyone should be in on this.

28 **Frank** (*eating*). Clarry, I'm telling you this is going to be a job well done. It's how you have to do these things. Everybody getting together first . . . and boom, it's over. I can't wait til it's started. It's been long enough.

29 **Clarice.** I saw her out the window today, hanging clothes in her yard like nothing was wrong. She didn't even look this way.

**Frank.** What time is it?

**Clarice.** Now you just asked me two minutes ago. It's about three minutes to seven. What's the matter with you? You'll be getting yourself an ulcer over this thing. Relax, Frank. Here, have some more pie.

**Frank.** No, No more.

[He gets up and walks around nervously, slapping his fist into his palm. Roger is looking at him now. He is tense, excited, completely caught up in the impending event.]

**Frank.** This is something big, you know that, Clarry? We're getting action without pussyfooting for once. That's it. That's the big part. There's too much pussyfooting going on all the time. Can't hurt anyone's feelings. Every time you turn around you're hurting some idiot's feelings. Well that's tough, I say . . .

**Clarice** (*indicating Roger*). Frank . . .

**Frank.** He can hear! He's old enough. You want something bad, you gotta go out and get it! That's how this world is. Boy, I like this, Clarry. You know what it makes me feel like? It makes me feel like a man!

[He stalks up and down the room for a few moments as they watch him. Then he goes to the window and stands there looking out.]

**Clarice** (*quietly*). I think I'll just stack the dishes.

[She starts to do it. The doorbell rings. Roger jumps up.]

**Roger.** I'll get it.

[He goes to the door and opens it. Arthur Hayes stands there a bit apologetically. He wears no overcoat, having just come from next door. He looks extremely upset.]

**Arthur.** Rog, is your dad in?

**Roger.** Sure. Come on in, Mr. Hayes.

[Arthur walks in slowly. Frank turns around, still excited. He goes over to Arthur.]

**Frank** (loud). Hey, Artie. Come on in.

**Arthur.** Hello, Frank . . .

**Frank** (laughing). What can I do for you?

(Arthur looks hesitatingly at Roger.) Oh, sure.

Rog, go help your mother.

**Roger** (annoyed). Okay . . .

[He walks off to dining table.]

**Frank** (chuckling). That's some kid, isn't he, Artie? How old is yours now?

**Arthur.** Twenty-one months.

**33 Frank.** Yeah. Well, that's still nothing but a crying machine. Wait a couple years. He'll kill you.

**Arthur.** I guess so.

**Frank.** And how! Sit down for a minute, Artie. What's on your mind?

**Arthur** (sitting. Hesitantly). Well, I don't know. . . I just . . . well . . . I just wanted . . . to talk.

**Frank.** No kidding. Say, y'know you look a little green around the gills? What's the matter?

[Arthur Hayes takes off his eyeglasses and begins to polish them, a nervous habit in which he indulges when upset.]

**Arthur.** Nothing. I've had an upset stomach for a couple of days. Maybe that's it.

**Frank** (nodding). Yeah, that'll get you down all right. Probably a virus.

[Arthur nods and they look at each other awkwardly for a moment.]

**34 Frank.** Well, what did you want to talk to me about?

[Arthur looks at the floor, trying to frame his answer carefully, afraid to offend. Finally he blurts it out.]

**Arthur.** What do you think about this thing tonight?

**Frank** (surprised). What do you mean what do I think about it?

**35 Arthur.** Well, I've been kind of going over it all day, Frank. I talked with Phyllis before.

**36 Frank** (a little hard). And . . .

**Arthur.** Well, it was just talk. We were just talking it over to get clear on it, you know.

**Frank.** Go ahead.

**Arthur.** And . . . well, look, Frank, it's a pretty hard thing. Supposing it were you?

**37 Frank.** It's not.

**Arthur.** Well, I know that, but supposing it were?

[Frank stands up and goes over to Arthur.]

**38 Frank.** Your glasses are clean. You wear 'em out, you have to buy a new pair. (Arthur looks down at his glasses, then puts them on nervously.) Now what about it, Artie? What if I was the guy?

**Arthur.** Well, you know . . . how would you feel?

**Frank.** How would I feel, huh? Now that's a good question, Artie. I'll answer it for you. It doesn't make any difference how I'd feel. Now let me ask you a question. Is he a life-long buddy of yours?

**Arthur.** Well, now, you know he's not, Frank.

**Frank.** Do you know him to say hello to?

**Arthur.** That's not the idea. He's—

**39 Frank.** Artie . . . you don't even know the guy. What are you getting yourself all hot and bothered about? We all agreed, didn't we?

**Arthur.** Yes . . . everybody agreed.

**Frank.** You. Me. The Dentons. The McAllisters. The Fredericks. The Schofields. Every family on Sycamore Street for that mat-

**33**

**Diction.** Frank frequently uses phrases with no definite or literal meaning in context. Examples: "He'll kill you." "And how!" "No kidding."

**34**

Frank knows Arthur is there to discuss the planned event.

**35**

**Characterization.** Arthur is a thinking man. He takes a long time to decide things.

**36**

Frank's impatience shows. He has little tolerance for Arthur's "pussyfooting."

**37**

Frank refuses to reason, to look at situation from another's point of view; mind is made up.

**38**

Speaking in manner of parent to a child, Frank teases Arthur for his nervous habit of polishing his glasses.

**39**

**What seems to be Frank's point?** Frank apparently thinks there is no need to care about feelings of someone he does not know.



40

As Frank sees it, if a majority agreed on it, it is right.

41

**Conflict.** Again Frank treats Arthur like a child, then implies that it would look bad for Arthur not to be there. A veiled threat.

42

Clarice's comment reveals that Roger and Christopher fight viciously and often.

43

Earlier, Frank and Clarice would not discuss event in front of boys. Now Frank wants to take them along. He argues that "it" is "for them."

44

Roger's compliment that his father is "greatest guy in all the whole world" is ironic in view of Frank's plans.

45

**Simile.** Charlie is as eager as Frank about tonight's action; "eager as a child" casts ironic light on his maturity.

40 **ter.** We all agreed. That's how it is. The major-  
ity. Right?

**Arthur.** Well . . . I think we all ought to talk it over, maybe. Let it wait a few days.

[*He takes off his glasses again and begins to wipe them.*]

41 **Frank.** Artie . . . we talked it over. (*Frank takes the handkerchief out of Arthur's hand and tucks it into his pocket.*) In about ten minutes we're starting. We expect to have a solid front, you know what I mean? Everybody. You included. You're my next-door neighbor, boy. I don't want to hear people saying Artie Hayes wasn't there. **Arthur** (*hesitantly*). Well, I don't know, Frank. I thought—

[*The phone rings. Frank goes toward it.*]

**Frank.** Go home, Artie. Don't worry about it. I'll see you in a few minutes. (*Frank goes to the phone and picks it up. Arthur stares at him.*) Hello . . . (*Arthur turns away and walks slowly to door.*) Speaking.

[*Arthur goes out, dazed and frightened. Clarice comes into living room and stands waiting as Frank listens to phone.*]

**Frank** (*angry*). What do you mean you can't get here? (*Pause*) Well, this is a great time to call! (*Pause*) I know. Yeah. (*He slams the phone down. To Clarice.*) Our sitter can't get here. How d'you like that?

**Clarice.** What's wrong with her?

**Frank.** I don't know. She's got a cold, or something. Nice dependable girl you pick.

**Clarice** (*snapping*). Well, I didn't exactly arrange for her to get a cold, you know.

**Frank.** Look, Clarry, we're going to this thing no matter what.

42 **Clarice.** Well, I'm not leaving Chris with Roger. They'll claw each other to pieces.

**Frank.** Then we'll take them with us.

**Clarice.** You wouldn't . . .

43 **Frank.** Who wouldn't? We're doing it for them as much as anyone else, aren't we? Well, they might as well see it.

**Clarice.** Maybe I'd better stay home with them.

**Frank.** No, sir. You've been in on this from the beginning. You're going. Come on, get Chris dressed. We haven't got much time.

**Clarice.** Well . . . whatever you think, Frank . . .

**Frank.** I'm telling you it's all right. Won't hurt 'em a bit. (*To Roger*) What d'you say, son? Want to come along?

44 **Roger** (*eagerly*). Oh, boy! Really? (*Frank nods and grins. Roger leaps happily.*) Gee, Dad, you're the greatest guy in all the whole world.

[*He runs over and hugs Frank.*]

**Frank** (*grinning*). Go on, Clarry. Make it snappy.

[*Clarice goes into the bedroom. Doorbell rings.*]

**Roger.** I'll get it, Dad.

45 [*He runs to the door and opens it. Charlie Denton, forty years old and eager as a child, stands there. He comes in fast, excited.*]

**Charlie.** Hiya, Rog. Frank, you all set?

**Frank.** Hello, Charlie. Another minute or two. How's it look?

**Charlie.** Great. I'm checking house to house. Everybody's ready.

**Frank.** Good. Any changes?

**Charlie.** Nope. It's gonna be fast and quiet. What time you got?

**Frank** (*calling*). Clarry, what time is it?

**Clarice** (*calling*). Twelve after.

### CLOSURE

Ask students to identify and analyze several incidents which indicate the character of the Morrison family.

### EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Act One does not explain exactly what has upset the neighborhood. Students could speculate in brief essays or class discussion about the causes of the neighborhood unrest and what the neighbors plan to do.

**Charlie** (*looking at watch*). Make it thirteen. At 48 fifteen we go.

**Frank**. Right. Hey listen, you better look in on Artie Hayes next door. He's been acting a little peculiar.

**Charlie**. I spoke to him a little while ago on the street. I think he was coming over to see you. Don't worry about a thing. I'll be watching him. See you, Frank. Let's make this good.

**Frank**. You bet we will. It looks like a beaut.

46 Take off. (*Charlie goes out fast.*) Get on your coat, Rog. (*Calling.*) Clarry!

[*Roger goes to closet and begins to get his coat. Frank stalks nervously up and down.*]

**Clarice** (*calling*). In a minute . . .

[*Frank goes to the window and looks out. He watches and waits. We can see the excitement building within him. Roger, hat and coat on, joins him at window. Frank puts his arm on Roger's shoulder and talks, half to himself.*]

47 **Frank** (*low*). How do you like that Artie Hayes? Maybe we ought to think it over! I could've belted him one. How do you like that guy!

**Roger**. What do you mean, Dad?

**Frank** (*calling*). Clarry!

**Clarice** (*calling*). Here I am. Come on, Chris.

[*Clarice walks into living room followed by a very sleepy Christopher. He is in his hat and coat. He wanders over to Frank.*]

**Frank**. What time is it?

**Clarice**. Almost fourteen after.

**Frank**. Almost fifteen. Put on your coat.

[*Clarice goes to the closet and does so. Frank follows her and gets his. He puts it on. Clarice picks up a large thermos from the foyer table.*]

48 **Clarice** (*low*). Frank . . . I'm busting with excitement.

**Frank** (*low*). Yeah. So'm I, honey. (*Louder*) Come over here, boys. (*The two boys walk over to them.*) Stand here.

[*They wait now behind the closed front door, all four of them tense, quiet, hardly able to stand the suspense. They wait for several seconds, and then, in the street, we begin to hear the heavy tread of marching feet.*]

**Christopher**. Hey, Daddy . . . where we going?

**Frank**. Ssh. Be quiet, son.

[*He bends over and picks Christopher up. The sound of marching feet grows louder and stronger. They wait till it reaches a crescendo. Frank speaks quietly now.*]

**Frank**. Let's go.

[*He opens the front door and they walk into a mob of 49 grimly advancing men and women. They join the mob and walk with them quietly, and the only sound we hear is the frightening noise of the tramping feet. Fade out.*]

### Reading Check

1. When does the first act of the play begin?
2. What does Frank Morrison do to surprise his children?
3. Why is the family eating dinner earlier than their usual time?
4. Why does Arthur Hayes visit Frank?
5. What do Frank and his family do at the end of Act One?

46

**Diction.** Frank's use of abbreviated names suggests excitement and enjoyment in being part of such a group endeavor.

47

Frank's contempt for Arthur Hayes is clear. Frank is so excited he forgets he is talking to his son Roger, a child.

48

First clear indication that Clarice shares intensity of Frank's feelings about plans.

49

**Suspense.** Act ends in suspense, just as it began. Audience still does not know exactly what is supposed to happen.

### READING CHECK

1. At 6:40 p.m. (p. 450).
2. After his sons shoot him with toy pistols, he pretends to be dead, then comes to life (p. 450).
3. Frank and his wife have plans for 7:15 p.m. (p. 452).
4. Hayes plans to voice hesitancy about going through with "this thing tonight" (p. 455).
5. They join their neighbors in a march (p. 457).

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify and contrast the motivation of Arthur Hayes with the motives of his wife and Frank Morrison. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Morrison: "heavy man, forceful, and aggressive, with a loud voice." Hayes: "quiet, bespectacled." 1b. Frank is eager to do what has been planned for evening; Arthur uncertain.
2. He likes idea of violence and rough games that simulate violence.
- 3a. Morrisons hate Blakes. 3b. Near first of play, Frank gives Blake look of hatred. Later, when Roger says that children dumped garbage on Blakes' lawn, Frank accepts news approvingly.
4. All on block will be involved in event.
- 5a. Frank is determined, even eager, to carry out plan. Arthur is hesitant, unsure; doubts derive from moral scruples, from sympathy for intended victim. 5b. Students may find Frank's cheerful brutality less sympathetic than Arthur's timidity.
6. Students may cite advancing mob, noise of marching feet.

## Act Two

1

Arthur's nervousness is revealed early in this act.

2

Arthur is not looking forward to seeing Frank later.

3

**Foreshadowing.** Arthur's gaze is clue that tonight's event is somehow connected with Blake.

## VOCABULARY

The students may enjoy analyzing Arthur's use of language. Does he use much slang? Does he often use catch phrases? What may be learned about Arthur by analysis of his speech habits?

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask the students if they have ever had to stand firm against the opinion of family and friends. If so, they can identify with the battle Arthur Hayes faces in this act.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

- 1a. At the beginning of Act One, how are Frank Morrison and Arthur Hayes contrasted physically? b. What other contrast emerges from their conversation?
2. What is revealed about Frank when he is shown playing with his sons that is disturbing?
- 3a. What do the Morrisons' actions and words reveal about their attitude toward their neighbors, the Blakes? b. Point out specific examples.
4. Frank tells Clarice about a conversation he had with Charlie Denton. What important information is provided?
- 5a. How does Arthur Hayes's visit to the Morrisons confirm and develop the contrast between Frank and Arthur? b. Which character do you find less sympathetic?
6. What is ominous about the conclusion of Act One?

## Act Two

*Fade in on long shot of Sycamore Street. It is once again 6:40 P.M., the same night. We have gone backward in time and we now duplicate exactly the scene which opened Act One. Arthur Hayes walks on, stops in front of his house, knocks his pipe against his heel. Frank Morrison enters. Each of the movements they make, the attitudes they strike and the inflections they use must be exact imitations of the Act One business. The audience must feel that this scene is a clip of film which we are rerunning.*

**Frank** (jovially). Hey, Artie. How ya doin'?

[Arthur is preoccupied. He doesn't register at first. He looks blankly at Frank.]

**Frank** (laughing). Hey . . . wake up, boy. It's almost time for supper.

[Arthur snaps out of it and forces a smile.]

**Arthur** (quietly). Oh . . . hello, Frank. Sorry, I didn't see you.

**Frank**. Didn't see me? Hey, wait till I tell Clarice. That diet she's got me on must be working. You have to look twice to see me! (Laughing hard, Frank reaches for his keys.) That's a hot one! (Arthur smiles weakly.) Say . . . isn't this late for you to be getting home?

**Arthur**. No, I don't think so. (He looks at his watch.) It's twenty to seven. I always get home about this time.

**Frank**. Yeah. Well I wouldn't want you to be late tonight. You know what tonight is, don't you?

**Arthur** (slowly). Yes, I know what tonight is.

**Frank** (a little hard). Good.

[We hear footsteps and see a man walk by them. He is Joseph Blake, a man in his late thirties, a big, powerful, but quiet man. Joseph Blake lives in the third house on the street. As he walks by them they both look at him silently. And now, for the first time, this scene moves in a different direction than did the scene at the beginning of Act One. Instead of coming in close on Frank, the camera comes in close on Arthur Hayes as he stands nervously in front of his door, afraid to look at either Joseph Blake or Frank Morrison. We hear Joseph's footsteps fade out. Arthur reaches for his keys.]

**Frank** (low, off). See you later, Artie.

- 2 [Arthur winces at this. We hear Frank's door opening and closing softly. Arthur turns now and looks off at Joseph Blake's house for a moment. Then he turns and opens his door. As he enters his foyer we hear dance music playing softly. The living room is lighted, and looking on from the foyer, we can see
- 3



## PRESENTATION

Although the beginning of this act is almost the same as that of Act One, students will notice that the focus shifts to Arthur even before he enters his house.

You could point out that another significant

difference between the openings of Act Two and Act One is that the reader now knows more about Frank Morrison, and—sensing that something foul is afoot—is perhaps less likely to condemn Arthur for his lack of enthusiasm about the unnamed project.

Later in Act Two, students will learn that Arthur is a man of conscience with definite and strong beliefs that go against the event planned for the evening. Some students may note the irony that the “respectable” people of this community have banded together to perform an

Mr. Harkness, Arthur's father-in-law, seated in an armchair, reading the newspaper. He is perhaps sixty-five years old, and usually does nothing more than sit reading the newspapers. He looks up as Arthur comes in.]

- 4 **Mr. Harkness.** Hello, Arthur. (*Calling off*) Here he is, Phyllis. (*To Arthur*) Little bit late, aren't you?

[Arthur is hanging up his coat. He is obviously worried. His face shows concern. His entire manner is subdued. He speaks quietly, even for Arthur.]

**Arthur.** No. Usual time.

[Mr. Harkness takes out a pocket watch, looks at it, shakes it.]

**Mr. Harkness.** Mmm. Must be fast.

[He goes back to his newspaper. Arthur walks into the living room tiredly.]

**Arthur** (*not caring*). How's your cough?

**Mr. Harkness** (*reading*). Still got it. I guess I must've swigged enough cough syrup to float a rowboat today. Waste of time and money!

[Phyllis enters from kitchen as Arthur goes over to phonograph from which the dance music is blasting. He is just ready to turn it off as she enters.]

**Mr. Harkness.** Cough'll go away by itself like it always does.

- 5 **Phyllis** (*brightly*). Hello, darling. Ah . . . don't  
6 turn it off.

[He turns as she walks over to him. She kisses him possessively and leads him away from the phonograph. The music continues.]

**Phyllis.** How did it go today, dear?

**Arthur.** All right. Nothing special.

**Phyllis.** What about the Franklin closing?

**Arthur.** It's called off till tomorrow.

**Phyllis.** How come?

**Arthur.** I didn't ask them.

**Phyllis.** Well, you'd think they'd at least give you a reason. You should've asked. I don't like it when people push you around like that.

[Arthur goes over to a chair without answering. A pipe is on an end table next to the chair. He begins to fill it. Phyllis goes to a small bar on which is a cocktail shaker and one glass. She picks up the shaker.]

**Arthur.** What's that?

**Phyllis.** I made you a drink.

**Arthur.** No. No, thanks. I don't want a drink now.

**Phyllis.** Oh, Artie! I made it specially for you. You look tired. Come on, it'll do you good. (*She begins to pour the drink.*) Sit down, dear. I'll bring it over to you.

[Arthur sits down. Phyllis finishes pouring the drink and brings it to him. He takes it. She waits, smiling, for him to drink it.]

- 8 **Arthur.** How come you made me a drink tonight?

**Phyllis.** Just for luck. Taste it. (*She sits on the arm of the chair. He tastes it slowly. She puts her arm around him.*) Good?

- 9 **Arthur** (*slowly*). It's good.

**Phyllis.** I thought you'd like it.

**Arthur.** Where's Billy?

**Phyllis.** Asleep.

**Arthur.** Isn't it kind of early?

**Phyllis.** He didn't get much of a nap today. The poor baby couldn't keep his eyes open. Artie, he's getting to be such a devil. You should've seen him this afternoon. He got into my bag and took my lipstick. If I only could've taken a picture of his face. He walked into the

- 4 **Is Arthur late? If so, why?** Probably. Frank and Mr. Harkness are familiar with Arthur's routine. Arthur may have been putting off coming home and facing evening events.

- 5 Phyllis is in a much better mood than Arthur. She is looking forward to evening.

- 6 Phyllis wants music playing, probably to cheer Arthur up, perhaps so that she can talk to him without being overheard by her father.

- 7 **Characterization.** Phyllis thinks Arthur lets others push him around too easily. But, as actions show, she thinks it all right for her to push Arthur around.

- 8 Arthur notices something out of the ordinary. Phyllis seems to be trying hard to please him, perhaps to distract him from evening's event.

- 9 **Characterization.** Arthur tends to accommodate others in trivial matters.

antisocial, criminal act against one of their neighbors because they think that his "criminal" record makes him less respectable than they.

Finally, the nature of the event will be revealed. You could note that **suspense** is not diminished. Suspense about what the event is

will be replaced by other suspense as the time of the march nears and the feet of the marchers can be heard. Will Arthur give in to his wife? Will he march against his next-door neighbor? What will happen when the marchers reach the Blakes' house?

Students may ask questions about why the people in the neighborhood think so highly of themselves and why nobody has checked into the charges against Joe Blake. These questions may take some time to discuss, but the discussion will be valuable preparation for Act Three.

kitchen and I swear I almost screamed. You never saw anything so red in your life. Drink your drink, darling. It took me ten minutes to scrub it off.

[*Obediently, Arthur sips his drink.*]

**Arthur** (*mildly*). I'd like to have seen him before he went to bed.

**Phyllis**. Now you know I had to get finished early tonight, Artie. (*She gets up and goes toward the kitchen.*) We're eating in a few minutes. I'm just making melted cheese sandwiches. We can have a snack later if you're hungry.

**Arthur**. Later?

**Phyllis** (*looking at him oddly*). Yes, later. When we get back.

**10** [Arthur puts his drink down. All of his movements are slow, almost mechanical, as if he has that day aged twenty years. Phyllis goes into the kitchen. He takes off his glasses and begins polishing them.]

**Mr. Harkness**. Melted cheese sandwiches.

**Arthur** (*not hearing*). What?

**Mr. Harkness**. I said melted cheese sandwiches. That gluey cheese. Do you like it?

**Arthur**. No.

**Mr. Harkness**. Me neither. Never did.

[*He goes back to his paper. Arthur gets up and goes to phonograph. He stands over it, listening. Phyllis comes in carrying a tray on which are three glasses of tomato juice. She gives it to Arthur.*]

**11** **Phyllis**. Put these on the table like a good boy. (*He takes it and looks at her strangely.*) What's the matter with you, Artie? You've hardly said a word since you got home . . . and you keep looking at me. Are you sick, or something?

**Arthur**. No. I'm not sick.

**Phyllis**. Here, let me feel your head. (*She does so.*) No, you feel all right. What is it?

**Arthur**. Nothing. I'm just tired, I guess.

**Phyllis**. Well, I hope you perk up a little.

[*She goes off into kitchen. Arthur goes slowly to dining table, which is set in the same spot as the Morrison dining table. He puts the glasses on it, and sets the tray on the end table. He takes a sip of his drink. Phyllis comes in from the kitchen carrying a platter of melted cheese sandwiches. She goes to the table, puts it down.*]

**Phyllis**. Dinner. Come on, Dad, while they're hot. Artie . . .

**12** **Arthur**. You go ahead. I'm not hungry.

**Phyllis**. Oh, now, let's not start that. You have to eat. Try one. They're nice and runny.

**Arthur**. Really, I'm not hungry.

**Phyllis**. Well, you can at least sit with us. I haven't seen you since half past eight this morning.

[*Arthur goes slowly over to the table and sits down. Mr. Harkness ambles over.*]

**13** **Mr. Harkness**. Well, I'm good and hungry. Tell you that. Got any pickles?

**Phyllis**. No pickles. You know they give you heartburn.

**Mr. Harkness**. Haven't had heartburn in a long time. Wouldn't mind a slight case if it came from pickles.

[*They are all seated now, Phyllis facing the window. Arthur sits quietly. Mr. Harkness busies himself drinking water while Phyllis serves the sandwiches, potato salad, etc.*]

**Phyllis**. Artie . . . potato salad?

**14** **Arthur**. No. Look, Phyllis . . .

**Phyllis**. Just a little.

[*She puts a spoonful on a heavily loaded plate and passes it to him. He takes it. Now she serves her father.*]

**10**

**Characterization.** Arthur's movements show that he is deeply troubled. Audience also knows, from first act, that Arthur polishes glasses when he feels upset.

**11**

Like Frank, Phyllis treats Arthur like a child.

**12**

**Characterization.** Arthur is so upset that he does not want to eat.

**13**

**Tone.** Spunky exchanges such as this one from Phyllis' father are humorous, but rather than offering comic relief, they emphasize moral blindness of speakers.

**14**

Although Arthur asks not to be given potato salad, Phyllis ignores his wish (as she did earlier with drink).

**Phyllis.** Potato salad, Dad?

**Mr. Harkness.** I'll help myself.

*[She puts the bowl down and helps herself as does Mr. Harkness.]*

**Phyllis** (*brightly*). What happened at the office, dear? Anything new?

**Arthur.** No. It was quiet.

**Phyllis.** Did you hear about the Walkers wanting to sell their house?

**Arthur.** No.

**15 Phyllis.** You know, for a real-estate man you hear less about real estate than anyone I ever saw. I spoke to Margie Walker this morning. I just got to her in time. You're going to handle the sale. She told me she hadn't even thought of you till I called. Why is that, dear?

**Arthur.** I don't know why it is.

**Phyllis.** Well, anyway, she's expecting you to call her tomorrow. It ought to be a very nice sale for you, dear.

*[Arthur nods and looks down at his plate. There is silence for a moment.]*

**Mr. Harkness** (*chewing*). This stuff gets under my teeth.

**Phyllis.** Dad!

**Mr. Harkness.** Well, I can't help it, can I?

*[They eat for a moment and then Phyllis, looking out the window, sees movement in the house next door, the Blake house. She can no longer hold back the topic she's been trying not to discuss in front of Arthur.]*

**16 Phyllis.** Look at them. Every shade in the house is down. (*She looks at her watch.*) There isn't much more time. I wonder if they know. Do you think they do, Artie?

**Arthur** (*tired*). I don't know.

**Phyllis.** They must. You can't keep a thing like

**17** this secret. I wonder how they feel. (*She looks at Arthur.*) Artie, aren't you going to eat your dinner?

**Arthur** (*slowly*). How can you talk about them and my dinner in the same breath?

**Phyllis.** For Heaven's sakes . . . I don't know what's the matter with you tonight.

**18 Arthur** (*quietly*). You don't, do you?

**19** *[He gets up from the table and walks over to the phonograph. He stands there holding it with both hands, listening to the slick dance music. Then abruptly, he turns it off. Phyllis looks as if she is about to protest, but then decides not to.]*

**Mr. Harkness.** What d'you suppose is gonna happen over there? Boy, wouldn't I like to go along tonight.

**Phyllis** (*looking at Arthur*). Dad, will you please stop?

**Mr. Harkness.** Well, I would! How do you think it feels to be sixty-two years old and baby-sitting when there's real action going on right under your nose? Something a man wants to get into.

**20 Arthur** (*turning*). Be quiet!

**Mr. Harkness.** Now listen here——

**Arthur.** I said be quiet! (*He takes off his glasses and walks over to the table.*)

**Phyllis.** Artie, stop it! There's no need for you to raise your voice like that.

*[Arthur speaks more quietly now, feeling perhaps that he has gone too far.]*

**Arthur.** Then tell your father to keep his ideas to himself!

**Mr. Harkness** (*angrily*). Wait a minute!

*[Phyllis, in the ensuing argument, is quiet, calm, convincing, never losing her temper, always trying to soothe Arthur, to sweeten the ugly things she says by saying them gently.]*

**15**

Phyllis even takes care of Arthur's business. Thinks he is not aggressive enough in looking for customers.

**16**

Phyllis' remark makes it clear that tonight's event has something to do with Blakes.

**17**

Like Arthur but unlike Frank, Phyllis wonders how Blakes feel. Unlike Arthur, she has no concern for them.

**18**

*What has Arthur realized?* He stands alone. Phyllis does not understand or care about his reasons for opposing what is planned.

**19**

*Foreshadowing.* Phyllis had told him to leave music playing. His rebellion here and a few lines later foreshadows his later actions.

**20**

*Characterization.* Up to this point, Arthur has seemed unlikely to lose his temper.



21

**Rising action.** Phyllis reveals more about evening event.

22

Frank thinks actions are wrong; in contrast, Phyllis does not worry about right or wrong—something has to be done.

23

**Is Phyllis being realistic?** Responses may vary. Phyllis is not considering all possibilities. Double standard in her thinking that right to live where one chooses belongs only to those she deems "respectable."

24

**Conflict.** Source of neighborhood unrest finally revealed. Plan is to drive Blake from his home. Arthur's doubts about this action are source of his internal conflict and his conflict with his wife and neighbors.

25

From a fact (Blake was in prison), Phyllis infers wrongly that he is "hoodlum."

26

From prejudices and vague fears based on ignorance, Phyllis imagines social and financial disasters which can be prevented only by making Blakes move.

**Phyllis.** Dad, be quiet. Listen, Artie, I know you're tired, darling, but there's something we might as well face. In about fifteen or twenty minutes you and I and a group of our friends and neighbors are going to be marching on that house next door. Maybe it's not such a pleasant thing to look forward to, but something has to be done. You know that, Artie. You agreed to it with all the others.

**Arthur.** I didn't agree to anything. You agreed for the Hayes household. Remember?

**Phyllis.** All right, I agreed. I didn't hear you disagreeing. Oh, what's the difference, darling? You've been acting like there's a ten-ton weight on your back ever since you heard about it. And there's no point to it. It's all decided.

**Arthur.** All decided. What right have we got to decide?

**Phyllis.** It's not a question of right, Artie.

22 **Don't you see?** It's something we have to do, right or wrong. Do you really want them to live next door to you? Do you really want them?

**Arthur.** I always thought a man was supposed to be able to live anywhere he chooses no matter what anyone else wants.

**Phyllis.** But, dear, this isn't anywhere. This is Sycamore Street. It's not some back alley in a slum! This is a respectable neighborhood.

23 **Artie,** let's be realistic. That's one of the few things we can really say we have. We're respectable. Do you remember how hard we worked to get that way?

24 **Arthur.** Respectable! Phyllis, for heaven's sakes. We're talking about throwing a man out of his own home. What is the man? He's not a monster. He's a quiet guy who minds his own business. How does that destroy our respectability?

25 **Phyllis** (*hard*). He got out of prison two months ago. He's a common hoodlum.

**Arthur.** We don't know for sure.

**Phyllis.** We know. Charlie Denton doesn't lie.

He saw the man's picture in the Rockville papers just fifty miles from here the day he got out. Tell me, what does he do for a living? Where did he get the money to buy that house?

**Arthur.** I don't think that's any of your business.

26 **Phyllis.** But, Artie, the man was in jail for four years. That's our business! How do you know what he did? How do you know he won't do it again?

**Arthur.** We have police.

**Phyllis.** Police! Will the police stop his child from playing with Billy? What kind of a child must that be? Think about it. Her father is an ex-convict. That's a lovely thing to tell our friends. Why yes . . . you know Billy's little friend Judy. Of course you do. Her father spent a great deal of time in prison. Charming people. It's beautiful for the neighborhood, isn't it, Artie? It makes real-estate prices just skyrocket up. Tell me, who do you think'll be moving in next . . . and where'll we go?

[*Arthur doesn't answer. He sits down in a chair, troubled, trying to find an argument. Phyllis watches him closely.*]

**Mr. Harkness.** Listen, Artie—

[*But Phyllis puts her hand on his arm to shut him up. Arthur is thinking and she wants to see if her argument has worked.*]

**Arthur.** Look, Phyllis, this is a mob we're getting together. We're going to order this man out of his house . . . or we're going to throw him out. What right have we got to do it? Maybe most of us'd rather not have him as a neighbor, but, Phyllis, the man is a human being, not an old dog. This is an ugly thing we're doing . . .

**Phyllis.** We've got to do something to keep our

homes decent. There's no other way.  
**27** Somebody's always got to lose, Artie. Why should it be all of us when there's only one of him?

**Arthur.** I . . . I don't know.

[Arthur suddenly gets up and goes toward the front door as if going out. He buttons his jacket. Phyllis gets up, concerned.]

**Phyllis.** Where are you going?

**Arthur.** I'm going to talk to Frank Morrison.

**Phyllis.** All right. Maybe Frank'll make sense to you. (*Calling*) Wear your coat.

[But Arthur has opened the door and intends to go out without it. Phyllis looks at her watch.]

**28 Phyllis.** Arthur, it's freezing out! (*He is outside the door now.*) You'll catch cold. (*The door closes. She stands watching after him, obviously upset. Her father resumes his eating. She looks at the door for a long time. Then, without looking around*) Dad . . .

**Mr. Harkness.** Mmmm?

**Phyllis.** What do you think he'll do?

**Mr. Harkness.** Well . . . I don't know. You got any more of these cheese businesses? I'm hungry.

**Phyllis.** No. (*She goes to the window and looks out.*)

**Mr. Harkness.** Why don't you sit down, Phyl? He'll be all right.

**Phyllis.** What do you mean all right? Look at him. He's standing in front of Frank's house afraid to ring the bell.

**Mr. Harkness.** He'll calm down. Come away from that window and sit down. Have some coffee.

[*She moves away from the window and sits at table.*]

**Phyllis.** I've never seen him like this before.

**Mr. Harkness.** Well, what are you worried about? Tell you what. I'll go along with you.

**29** Boy, wouldn't I like to be in on a thing like this once. Let Artie stay home and mind the baby if that's how he feels.

[Phyllis turns to her father violently and for the first time we see how much Arthur's decision means to her.]

**30 Phyllis** (*fiercely*). He's got to go! Don't you understand?

**Mr. Harkness.** What the dickens is eating you? No, I don't understand. (*Phyllis gets up and goes to the window. She looks out tensely.*) Would you mind telling me what you're talking about?

**31 Phyllis** (*startled*). Oh, no!

[*She turns and runs to the front door. She starts to open it and run out. As she gets it half open we hear a low voice calling. Charlie Denton's voice.*]

**Charlie** (*low*). Artie! Hey, Artie!

[*She closes the door silently and stands against it, frightened. Cut to street in front of Frank's house. Arthur stands there, having just been hailed by Charlie. He turns, and then we see Charlie hurrying down the street toward him. Charlie gets to him, takes him by the arm.*]

**Charlie** (*low*). What are you doing out here now?

**Arthur** (*guiltily*). Nothing. I was . . . well, I was getting some air, that's all.

**Charlie.** Look, boy, this thing has got to be timed on the button. Everybody's supposed to be in his house right now. Nobody's supposed to be wandering around the streets. What time've you got?

**Arthur** (*with an effort*). Listen, Charlie, I want to talk to you about tonight.

**Charlie.** I haven't got time to talk.

**27**

This argument assumes truth of something that has not been shown to be true, that someone must lose.

**28**

**Foreshadowing.** Arthur again ignores what Phyllis tells him to do. Prepares audience for his actions in march.

**29**

**Characterization.** Mr. Harkness is from another generation than Frank, but he seems to share Frank's views on manhood.

**30**

Phyllis sees event as more serious matter than her father does.

**31**

Phyllis extremely worried about what Arthur might say to leaders of march.

32

**Symbol.** Watch is symbol of Arthur's opinions. Just as Arthur's watch does not agree with Charlie's watch, Arthur's views do not correspond to Charlie's (or Frank's or Phyllis').

33

Charlie also treats Arthur like child, grabbing his wrist and setting watch. Not interested in Arthur's thoughts about Blakes.

34

**Why does Arthur react this way?** Arthur is angry, depressed because has not been forceful.

35

**Conflict.** Arthur makes stand, but—as usual—Phyllis ignores what he says. Has to repeat himself.

**Arthur.** Please. It's important.

**Charlie** (*tough*). What the heck's the matter with you?

**Arthur.** Nothing. Nothing, Charlie . . .

32 **Charlie.** What time've you got? (*He grabs Arthur's wrist and holds it up to the light. He holds his own wrist next to it and compares the watches.*) You're three minutes slow.

**Arthur.** I know. This watch . . . it runs slow, Charlie . . .

**Charlie.** Well, fix it, willya? The timing's the most important part.

**Arthur.** I will. Look, about this thing to-night . . .

**Charlie.** Listen, if you're gonna start in with me about the plan, take it up with the committee, will ya, please? All of a sudden everybody's an expert on how to run the show. If you want the organizing job I'll be glad to give it to you.

**Arthur.** No, it's not that. It's organized very well. There's something else.

**Charlie.** Are you gonna fix that watch?

**Arthur.** I will. I've been meaning to set it all day. Listen . . . these people . . . the Blakes. They've got a kid . . .

33 **Charlie.** So has my mother. Here, gimme this. (*He grabs Arthur's wrist and sets his watch.*) There. At seven-fifteen on the nose we go. Now get back into your house. (*He walks off fast.*)

**Arthur.** Charlie . . .

[*But Charlie keeps going. Arthur watches him. Then he goes up to Frank Morrison's front door and rings the bell. From inside we hear Roger calling.*]

**Roger** (*off*). I'll get it.

[*Roger opens the front door, and now again, Roger's and Arthur's movements must be exactly as they were in the first act, except that now the camera catches them from outside the house.*]

**Arthur.** Rog, is your Dad in?

**Roger.** Sure. Come on in, Mr. Hayes.

[*Arthur walks in slowly. The door closes. Fade out.*]

*Fade in on the living room of Arthur's house. Phyllis sits tensely waiting for him. The dining table is cleared. Mr. Harkness is back in his easy chair reading the papers. We hear a key in the lock, the door opens, and Arthur enters. He walks slowly, despising himself for not having been stronger with Frank or Charlie. Phyllis gets up as he comes in. He doesn't look at her but walks over to the window and stands there. She comes up behind him. He doesn't turn around.]*

**Phyllis.** Artie . . . Artie, are you all right?

[*He turns around slowly, speaks heavily.*]

**Arthur.** Yeah, I'm fine.

**Phyllis.** What happened? What'd you say to them?

**Arthur.** I said nothing.

**Phyllis** (*hopefully*). Well, what do you mean you said nothing. Didn't you talk about it?

34 **Arthur.** No, I didn't talk about it. I didn't talk about anything. Will you leave me alone?

[*She backs away, alarmed. Then she looks at her watch.*]

**Phyllis** (*softly*). We only have a couple of minutes, dear.

35 **Arthur.** I'm not going out there.

**Phyllis.** I'd better get our coats.

**Arthur.** Did you hear what I just said?

**Phyllis.** We'll have to bundle up. It's only about twenty degrees out. Did you know that?

**Arthur.** I said I'm not going.

[*Phyllis backs away from him. He turns to the win-*]



dow. We can see that she is hugely upset; almost desperate. She looks at him fiercely. Mr. Harkness gets up quietly with his paper and goes into the next room. We hear the door close. Arthur doesn't move.]

**36 Phyllis (strongly).** I want to tell you something. I'm going to get our coats now, and we're going to put them on, and we're going to stand in the doorway of our house until it's seven-fifteen.

**Arthur (turning).** Stop it.

**37 Phyllis.** And then we're going to walk out into the gutter, you and me, the Hayes family, and we're going to be just like everybody else on Sycamore Street!

**Arthur (shouting).** Phyllis! I've told you . . . I'm not going to be a part of this thing!

[Phyllis studies him for a long moment.]

**Phyllis.** Listen to me, Artie. Listen to me good. I didn't think you needed to hear this before. **38** But you're going to hear it now. We're going out there. Do you want to know why? Because we're not going to be next!

**Arthur.** You're out of your mind!

**Phyllis (roaring).** Sure I am! I'm out of my mind all right. I'm crazy with fear because I don't want to be different. I don't want my

**36**

**Diction.** Phyllis changes her tactics; she abandons persuasion, speaking as mother might when trying to command obedience of young child.

**37**

Phyllis wants family to be same as all other families (except one) on Sycamore Street. Word *gutter* may be understood in ironic sense.

**38**

**Theme.** Phyllis has a practical reason for "going along": she understands consequences of mob rule and is afraid to make stand against it. Issue of individual's moral responsibility vs. society's pressure to conform.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In the scene in this photograph, Phyllis, "hugely upset; almost desperate," tells Arthur that they are going to participate in the evening plans "just like everybody else on Sycamore Street." Phyllis thus far in the play dominates and controls the Hayes family. You could lead a class discussion about Phyllis' character. Some students may find her ability to take charge and make decisions admirable. They may say she has been forced into her role because Arthur has not been a forceful person. Others may find her unfair, unrealistic, or overbearing.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to point out evidence that Arthur Hayes holds strongly to the belief that a man should not be thrown out of his own home. Have them identify and analyze the motives of his wife.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Phyllis Hayes argues that Arthur should go on the march so that he will not become an outcast. Students could consider why Mrs. Hayes feels as she does and write essays supporting either Arthur's or Phyllis' argument.

39

Phyllis puts issues in practical terms: if Arthur does not go along, his business and family's livelihood and social position are in jeopardy.

40

**Allusion.** Possibly to "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone" (John 8:7).

41

**Characterization.** Phyllis' position based entirely on short-term, selfish objectives. Does not include moral or ethical issues in decision.

42

**What does Phyllis mean by saying "it'll be over"? Do you think she is right?** She means neighborhood effort to drive Blakes away. May be over for her, but one suspects deed would continue to bother Arthur, and certainly consequences would not be over for Blakes.

## READING CHECK

1. 6:40 p.m., same time as Act One (p. 458).
2. His father-in-law, Mr. Harkness (p. 459).
3. He sells real estate (p. 461).
4. The neighbor, an ex-convict, spent four years in prison (p. 462).
5. Arthur and Phyllis join the marching mob (p. 466).

neighbors looking at us and wondering why we're not like them.

**Arthur** (*amazed*). Phyllis . . . you're making this up! They won't think that.

39 **Phyllis.** They will think that! We'll be the only ones, the odd ones who wanted to let an ex-convict live with us. They'll look the other way when we walk the streets. They'll become cold and nasty . . . and all of a sudden we won't have any neighbors. (*Pointing at the Blake house.*) We'll be like them!

[*Arthur stands looking at her and it begins to sink in. She knows it and goes after him.*]

**Phyllis.** We can't be different! We can't afford it! We live on the good will of these people. Your business is in this town. Your neighbors buy us the bread we eat! Do you want them to stop?

**Arthur.** I don't know . . . Phyllis . . . I don't know what to think . . . I . . . can't throw a stone at this man.

**Phyllis** (*strong*). You can! You've got to, or we're finished here.

[*He stares at her, not knowing what to say next. She has almost won and knows it. She looks at her watch.*]

**Phyllis.** Now just . . . wait . . . just stand there . . . (*She runs to the closet and takes out their overcoats. She throws hers on and brings his to him, holds it for him.*)

**Phyllis.** Put it on!

**Arthur.** I . . . can't. They're people. It's their home.

41 **Phyllis** (*shouting*). We're people too! I don't care what happens to them. I care what happens to us. We belong here. We've got to live here. Artie, for the love of God, we don't even know them. What's the difference what happens to them? What about us?

[*He has no answer. She begins to put his coat on. He stands there, beaten, wrecked, moving his arms automatically, no longer knowing the woman who is putting on his coat. She talks as she helps him.*]

**Phyllis.** There. It won't be long. I promise you. It won't be long. That's my Artie. That's my darling. Let's button up, dear. It's cold, We'll be back in an hour, and it'll be over. There. Now put on your gloves, darling.

[*She takes him by the arm and he stands there letting her do as she will. He puts on his gloves without knowing he is doing it, and they wait together, there in the doorway. She looks at him, trying to read him, as we begin to hear the cold and chilling sound of the tramping feet. Mr. Harkness comes out of the bedroom and stands there looking at them. Phyllis looks at her watch. The tramping grows louder. They wait in silence. Then she opens the door. We see the crowd, grimly marching, and the Morrisons are at the head of it. No one looks at the Hayeses. The dull thud of the tramping feet is sickening to hear. Arthur closes his eyes. Slowly now Phyllis pushes him forward. He steps out of the house and moves ahead to join the others, as if in a dream. Phyllis follows, catches up, and takes his arm as they join the marching mob. Fade out.*]

## Reading Check

1. When does Act Two begin?
2. Whom does Arthur Hayes encounter when he first enters his house?
3. What kind of work does Arthur Hayes do?
4. What do people on Sycamore Street have against Hayes's neighbor?
5. What happens at the end of Act Two?

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify changes in the behavior of Arthur Hayes and explain how those changes have been foreshadowed. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 477 gives the students practice in analyzing and rewriting emotionally loaded language.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

How would students feel if their neighbors got together and tried to force them out of their houses because their incomes were below the average for the neighborhood? Joe Blake faces a hostile neighborhood.

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

1. Act Two begins as Act One did. **a.** When does it begin to be different? **b.** What does the difference lead you to expect?
2. Phyllis tells Arthur, "I don't like it when people push you around like that." What does this statement reveal about her attitude toward him?
3. Phyllis and Arthur argue about what is planned for that evening. **a.** What do you learn that suggests Phyllis is the dominant one in the family? **b.** What reasons does she give for going through with what is about to happen?
- 4a. At the end of the act, why does Phyllis insist that Arthur join the march? **b.** What practical reason does she give? **c.** What general issue is raised?
5. Compare the ending of Act Two with that of Act One. How are Arthur and Frank contrasted?

## Act Three

*Fade in on a long shot of Sycamore Street. It is once again 6:40 P.M., same night. We have gone backward in time, and again we duplicate the scene which opened Acts One and Two. Arthur Hayes walks on, stops in front of his house, knocks his pipe against his heel. Frank Morrison enters. Again, each of the movements must be exact imitations of the movements in Acts One and Two. It is as if we are starting the play again.*

**Frank** (jovially). Hey, Artie. How ya doin'?

[Arthur is preoccupied. He doesn't register at first. He looks blankly at Frank.]

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 62 / Reading Check 37

**Frank** (laughing). Hey . . . wake up, boy. It's almost time for supper.

[Arthur snaps out of it and forces a smile.]

**Arthur** (quietly). Oh . . . hello, Frank. Sorry, I didn't see you.

**Frank**. Didn't see me? Hey, wait till I tell Clarice. That diet she's got me on must be working. You have to look twice to see me! (Laughing hard, Frank reaches for his keys.) That's a hot one! (Arthur smiles weakly.) Say . . . isn't this late for you to be getting home?

**Arthur**. No, I don't think so. (He looks at his watch.) It's twenty to seven. I always get home about this time.

**Frank**. Yeah. Well, I wouldn't want you to be late tonight. You know what tonight is, don't you?

**Arthur** (slowly). Yes, I know what tonight is.

**Frank** (a little hard). Good.

[We hear footsteps and see a man walk by them. He is Joseph Blake. They both look at him silently. Camera now follows him as he walks silently toward his house, the third of the three houses we see. As he walks, we hear faintly in background.]

- 1 **Frank** (off). See you later, Artie.

[We hear Frank's door open and close. Then we hear Arthur's door open, and for an instant, we hear the same dance music coming from Arthur's house that we heard in Act Two. Then Arthur's door closes. By this time Joseph Blake is in front of his door. He looks off silently at the other two houses. Then he opens his front door and enters his house. As he closes the door we hear running feet, and then we see Judy, Joe's six-year-old daughter, in a bathrobe and slippers, running at him.]

- 2 **Judy** (calling). Daddy Daddy Daddy Daddy.

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. After Joe Blake walks by, camera focuses on Arthur rather than Frank. 1b. That Act Two will be mostly about Arthur and his family.

2. She is a bit contemptuous of husband; thinks he is timid, too easily pushed around.

3a. Before consulting Arthur, Phyllis agreed to join march.

3b. March is necessary to maintain neighborhood's respectability.

4a. Phyllis does not want to seem different from neighbors.

4b. Arthur's real estate business depends on neighbors' good will.

4c. Conflict between personal moral standards and social pressure to conform.

5. In both acts, people are leaving to throw Blakes out of neighborhood. Morrisons are cheerful, excited; Hayeses are more hesitant. Unlike Frank, Arthur does not want to go.

## Act Three

### 1

Audience now understands what is meant by "later" and what is to happen.

### 2

**Characterization.** Joe is immediately identified as loving person by his daughter's greeting. In contrast, Frank was "shot" by his children, and Arthur was prevented from seeing his child.



## PRESENTATION

Act Three opens in almost the same way as the others but shifts attention to Joe Blake and his family. You could tell students that opening of this act is different because the audience already knows something about the characters and their

families and what is supposed to happen to Joe Blake.

Although this act begins at 6:40 p.m. again, the viewer feels that the march has already begun. This heightens the suspense.

Now the audience learns about Joe Blake. You

could ask students to discuss what kind of person he is. He is a loving father, an ex-convict because of an accident, not because of an intentionally criminal, antisocial deed. He is also a person of character and principle, who will not allow himself to be run out of the neighborhood.

3

**Characterization.** The “hoodlum” is very tender with his child—contrasts with Frank’s treatment of his children.

*[She runs into his arms. He lifts her up and hugs her.]*

3 **Joe.** Mmm. You smell sweet.

**Judy** (*excited*). I had a hairwash with Mommy’s special shampoo. It smells like gar . . . gar . . .

**Joe.** Gardenias. Did anyone ever tell you you smelled like gardenias even without Mommy’s shampoo?

**Judy** (*grinning*). You’re silly.

*[He tickles her and she giggles.]*

**Anna** (*calling*). Judy!

**Judy** (*importantly*). We’ve got company.

**Joe.** Oh? Who is it, darling?

**Anna** (*calling*). Judy!

**Judy.** A lady.

*[Joe puts her down. She runs inside. Joe takes off his coat, puts it into the closet, and walks into the living room. Joe’s wife, Anna, stands near a chair. Anna, in her early thirties, is a quiet, small woman who has obviously been through a great deal of suffering in the past five years. She looks extremely nervous and upset now. Seated at the far end of the room in a rocking chair is Joe’s mother, Mrs. Blake. She is quite old, quite spry for her years, and inclined to be snappish. Also seated in the room is a middle-aged woman, a neighborhood busybody named Mrs. Car-*

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

Frank Morrison says that he is marching for the sake of his children; Phyllis Hayes argues that Arthur should march because of the family livelihood; Joe Blake feels that he must defend his rights and his property for the sake of his daughter.

After class discussion of the positive and negative values involved in the arguments of these three characters, students might write an essay analyzing the viewpoint of one of the three.



Joe makes his stand not only for himself but also for his daughter. He has examined the situation and can see that running from this house means running from other houses. He does not want his daughter to think of herself as a second-class citizen.

Help students understand that Joe Blake's courage, which proves stronger than the mob's unity, inspires Arthur Hayes to stand up for his beliefs.

**4 son.** *She wears an odd, old-fashioned hat and sits stiffly, not at home, quite uncomfortable, but determined to do what she has come to do. The living room again is an exact duplicate of the Morrison and Hayes living rooms. It is furnished sparsely and not well. It is obvious that the Blakes have not been living there long. As Joe gets into the room, Anna comes toward him.]*

**Anna.** Joe, this is Mrs. Carson.

**Joe** (*politely*). Mrs. Carson.

*[He turns to her for a moment. She nods curtly. Then he turns back to Anna and kisses her gently.]*

**Joe.** Hello, darling.

**Anna.** Joe . . .

*[But he walks away from her and goes to his mother. He bends over and kisses her on the forehead.]*

**Mrs. Blake.** Your face is cold.

**Joe** (*smiling*). It's freezing out. How do you feel?

**Mrs. Blake.** Just fine, Joe.

*[He pats her cheek and turns to find Judy behind him, holding a piece of drawing paper and a crayon. On the paper is a childish scribble that looks vaguely like a boat. Anna, a tortured expression on her face, wants to say something, but Joe looks at the drawing, grinning.]*

**Judy.** Daddy . . .

**Joe.** The *Queen Mary*! Now that is what I call beautiful.

**Judy.** It is not! It's just s'posed to be a sailboat.

**5 How do you draw a sail?**

**6 Anna** (*shakily*). Joe . . . Mrs. Carson . . .

**Joe.** Well, let's see . . . *(He takes the crayon and paper and studies it.)* I suppose you think it's easy to draw a sail.

**Judy** (*serious*). No. I don't.

**Anna** (*sharply*). Joe. *(She comes over and snatches the paper away from him. He looks at her.)* Judy, go into your room.

**Joe.** Wait a minute, Anna. Take it easy.

**Anna** (*near tears*). Judy, did you hear me?

**7 Joe.** Darling, what's the matter with you?

**Anna.** Joe . . .

**Judy.** Mommy, do I have to?

**Joe** (*gently*). Maybe you'd better go inside for a few minutes, baby.

*[Judy unhappily goes into her room. Anna waits till we hear the door close. Joe puts his arms around her.]*

**Joe.** Tell me. What's wrong, Anna?

**Anna** (*almost sobbing*). Joe! I don't understand it! Mrs. Carson says . . . She . . .

**Joe** (*gently*). Mrs. Carson says what?

**Anna** (*breaking down*). She says . . . Joe . . . they're going to throw us out of our house. Tonight! Right now! What are we going to do?

**Joe** (*softly*). Well, I don't know. Who's going to throw us out of our house?

*[But Anna can't answer. Joe grips her tightly, then releases her and walks to Mrs. Carson, who sits stolidly, waiting.]*

**Joe.** Who's going to throw us out, Mrs. Carson? Do you know?

**8 Mrs. Carson.** Well, like I told Mrs. Blake there, I suppose it's none of my business, but I'm just not the kind that thinks a thing like this ought to happen to people without them getting at least a . . . well, a warning. Know what I mean?

**Joe.** No, I don't know what you mean, Mrs. Carson. Did someone send you here?

**9 Mrs. Carson** (*indignantly*). Well, I should say not! If my husband knew I was here he'd drag me out by the hair. No, I sneaked in here, if you please, Mr. Blake. I felt it was my Christian

**10 duty.** A man ought to have the right to run away, I say.

**4**

**Characterization.** Mrs. Carson's "odd, old-fashioned hat" suggests she is odd, old-fashioned person.

**5**

Like any child, Judy has probably been impatiently waiting to ask this question. To her, sailboat is as important as visitor.

**6**

Probably Joe usually spends this time with Judy when he gets home. Anna would not interrupt under normal circumstances.

**7**

Joe is taken aback at Anna's behavior, especially since visitor is present.

**8**

**Diction.** Mrs. Carson's informal, rambling, self-centered language suggests a person who likes to meddle.

**9**

**Why is Mrs. Carson indignant?** Responses will vary. Perhaps she wants to take full credit for what she perceives as a Christian act.

**10**

Mrs. Carson thinks that Joe Blake should have right to run away; a rather limited application of Bill of Rights.

11

**Characterization.** As a busybody, Mrs. Carson is accustomed to communicating in hints and insinuations. Joe immediately understands that she is referring to jail term.

12

**What does Mrs. Carson mean? Has she really thought these comments through?** Comments suggest that she would approve of "necessary violence" such as that which might occur if Blakes did not leave before mob's arrival. Not being a deep thinker, probably has not considered implications of her words.

13

Mrs. Carson blames Joe for problem. Thinks he caused it by trying to live where he should not, in "fine old neighborhood."

14

**Irony.** By "right is right" (an expression that can mean anything), Mrs. Carson means Joe has intentionally gone against what everyone knows is right. Neighborhood, as audience will learn, is not right in its assessment of Joe's personality or past.

15

Anna may be trying to apologize for Joe's abruptness. Joe does not want her to do so.

**Joe.** What do you mean run away. Mrs. Carson?

**Mrs. Carson.** Well, you know what I mean.

**Joe.** Who's going to throw us out?

11 **Mrs. Carson.** Well, everybody. The people on Sycamore Street. You know. They don't feel you ought to live here because . . . Now I don't suppose I have to go into that.

**Joe** (*understanding*). I see.

**Anna** (*breaking in*). Joe, I've been waiting and waiting for you to come home. I've been sitting here . . . and waiting. Listen . . .

**Joe** (*quietly*). Hold it, Anna. (*To Mrs. Carson*). What time are they coming, Mrs. Carson?

**Mrs. Carson.** Quarter after seven. That's the plan. (*She looks at her watch and gets up*.) It's near seven now. They're very angry people, Mr. Blake. I don't think it'd be right for anyone to get hurt. That's why I'm here. If you take my advice, you'll just put some stuff together in a hurry and get out. I don't think there's any point in your calling the police either. There's only two of 'em in Eastmont and I don't think they'd do much good against a crowd like this.

**Joe.** Thank you, Mrs. Carson.

**Mrs. Carson.** Oh, don't thank me. It's like I said. I don't know you people, but there's no need for anyone getting hurt long as you move out like everybody wants. No sir. I don't want

12 no part nor parcel to any violence where it's not necessary. Know what I mean?

**Joe.** Yes, I know what you mean.

**Mrs. Carson.** I don't know why a thing like this had to start up anyway. It's none of my business, but a man like you ought to know better than to come pushing in here . . . a fine old neighborhood like this! After all, right is right.

**Joe** (*controlled*). Get out, Mrs. Carson.

**Mrs. Carson.** What? Well I never! You don't seem to know what I've done for you, Mr. Blake.

**Anna.** Joe . . .

**Joe.** Get out of this house.

[*He goes to a chair in which lies Mrs. Carson's coat. He picks it up and thrusts it at her. She takes it, indignant and a bit frightened. Joe turns from her. She begins to put her coat on.*]

**Mrs. Carson.** Well, I should think you'd at least have the decency to thank me. I might've expected this though. People like you!

15 **Anna.** Mrs. Carson, please . . .

**Joe.** Anna, stop it!

[*He strides to the door and holds it open. Mrs. Carson walks out.*]

**Mrs. Carson.** I think maybe you'll be getting what you deserve, Mr. Blake. Good night.

[*She goes out. Joe slams the door.*]

**Anna.** It's true. I can't believe it! Joe! Did you hear what she said? (*She goes to Joe, who still stands at the door, shocked.*) Well, what are you standing there for?

**Joe** (*amazed*). I don't know.

**Anna.** Joe, I'm scared. I'm so scared, I'm sick to my stomach. What are we going to do?

[*Joe puts his arms around her as she begins to sob. He holds her close till she quiets down. Then he walks her slowly over to his mother.*]

**Joe** (*to his mother*). Will you read to Judy for a few minutes, Mother? It's time for her story. (*Mrs. Blake starts to get up.*) Winnie the Pooh. She'll tell you what page.

[*Mrs. Blake nods and gets up and goes into Judy's room.*]

**Anna.** What are you doing, Joe? We've only got fifteen minutes . . . Don't you understand?



**Joe** (*quietly*). What do you want me to do? I can't stop them from coming here.

[*She goes to him and looks up at him, pleading now.*]

**Anna** (*whispering*). Joe. Let's get out. We've got time. We can throw some things into the car. . . .

**16 Joe**. Isn't it a remarkable thing? A quiet street like this and people with thunder in their hearts.

**Anna**. Listen to me, Joe—please. We can get most of our clothes in the car. We can stop at a motel. I don't care where we go. Anywhere. Joe, you're not listening. (*Loud*) What's the matter with you?

**Joe**. We're staying.

**Anna** (*frightened*). No!

**Joe**. Anna, this is our home and we're staying in it. No one can make us get out of our home. No one. That's a guarantee I happen to have since I'm born.

**17 Anna** (*sobbing*). Joe, you can't! Do you know what a mob is like? Do you know what they're capable of doing?

**Joe**. It's something I've never thought of before . . . a mob. I guess they're capable of doing ugly things.

**18 Anna**. Joe, you're talking and talking and the clock is ticking so fast. Please . . . please . . . Joe. We can run. We can go somewhere else to live. It's got so hard.

**Joe**. It's very hard, Anna, when it's not your own choice.

**19 Anna** (*sobbing*). What are you talking about? What else've we got to do? Stand here and fight them? We're not an army. We're one man and one woman and an old lady and a baby.

**20 Joe**. And the floor we stand on belongs to us. Not to anyone else.

**Anna**. They don't care about things like that. Joe, listen to me, please. You're not making sense. Listen . . . Judy's inside. She's six years

old now and she's only really known you for a few weeks. We waited four years for you, and she didn't remember you when you picked her up and kissed her hello, but, Joe, she was so happy. What are you gonna tell her when they set fire to her new house?

**Joe**. I'm gonna tell her that her father fought like a tiger to stop them.

**Anna** (*crying*). Oh, no! No! No! What good will that do? Joe . . . please . . . please . . .

**Joe** (*thundering*). Stop it! (*Anna turns away from him and covers her face. After a long pause, quietly.*)

It's this way, Anna. We have a few things we own. We have this house we've just bought with money left from before . . . money you could have used many times. We have a mortgage and a very old car and a few pieces of furniture. We have my job.

**Anna** (*bitterly*). Selling pots and pans at kitchen doors.

**22 Joe** (*patiently*). We have my job. And we have each other and that's what we have. Except there's one more thing. We have the right to live where we please and how we please. We're keeping all of those things, Anna. They belong to us.

[*He comes up behind her and puts his hands on her shoulders. She sinks down in a chair, turned away from him, and sobs. He stands over her. She continues to sob. He holds her and tries to quiet her. The bedroom door opens and Judy bounces into the room. Joe gets up and goes to her as Anna tries to dry her tears.*]

**Judy**. Grandma says I'm supposed to go to bed now. Do I have to, Daddy?

**Joe** (*smiling*). It's time, honey.

**Judy** (*disappointed*). Gee whiz. Some night, I'm gonna stay up until four o'clock in the morning!

**Joe**. Some night, you can. (*He kisses her.*) Good night, baby. Give Mommy a kiss.

## 16

*How does Joe's comment, from which title of play comes, apply to residents on Sycamore Street, too? Outward natures of people may belie real prejudices and feelings.*

## 17

*Anna, like Phyllis, clearly understands implications of mob action. She seems governed by fear.*

## 18

*Suspense. Anna's words remind audience of passage of time, heightening tension of scene.*

## 19

*Anna defines conflict and arouses sympathy by reminding audience that the Blakes are only "one man . . . and a baby" against mob.*

## 20

*Joe knows his rights and is not about to give them up.*

## 21

*Exposition. Only now does audience learn how the Blakes bought the house and what Joe does for living.*

## 22

*Emphasizing positive, Joe summarizes what is theirs. He will not give up right to live where and how they please.*

23

**Irony.** Joe comments with verbal irony on “dignity” of neighborhood where people throw garbage on neighbor’s lawn.

24

Fear and ignorance incite people to act irrationally. Strength of numbers makes them feel secure against fears.

25

**Exposition.** Anna reveals information withheld until now, that Joe’s prison term resulted from auto accident, not premeditated crime.

26

Joe knows mob not interested in facts. Furthermore, thinks he owes no explanation.

27

**Theme.** Joe summarizes his understanding of democracy: all have certain rights, including right to be different.

28

**Why is it important for Joe to stay on his own terms? Would Joe take same stand if he had no child?** Joe must stay to preserve self-respect and individual dignity. Joe would probably stay for himself, but having wife and child intensifies his feelings.

[Judy goes to Anna and speaks as she is kissing her.]

**Judy.** Really? I really can stay up till four o’clock?

**Joe.** Really.

**Judy.** Night, Mommy.

**Anna.** Good night, darling.

[Judy runs off gleefully to the bedroom.]

**Judy.** Oh boy! (Calling) Grandma . . .

[The door closes. Anna gets up and goes to window. She is still terrified, but a bit calmer now. She looks out and then turns to Joe. He watches her.]

**Anna.** What’ve we done to hurt them? What’ve we done? I don’t understand.

23 **Joe** (softly). Well, I guess maybe they think we’ve destroyed the dignity of their neighborhood, darling. That’s why they’ve thrown garbage on our lawn.

**Anna.** Dignity! Throwing garbage. Getting together a mob. Those are dignified things to do. Joe, how can you want to stay? How can you want to live on the same street with them? Don’t you see what they are?

24 **Joe.** They’re people, Anna. And I guess they’re afraid, just like we are. That’s why they’ve become a mob. It’s what people always do.

[The bedroom door opens and Joe’s mother enters. She goes to her rocker and sits in it and begins to rock.]

**Anna.** What are they afraid of?

**Joe.** Living next door to someone they think is beneath them. An ex-convict. Me.

[Anna runs to Joe and grips him excitedly.]

**Anna.** What do they think you did? They must think you’re a thief or a murderer.

**Joe.** Maybe they do.

**Anna.** Well, they can’t. You’ll tell them. You’ll tell them, Joe.

**Joe.** Anna, listen . . .

**Anna.** It could’ve happened to any one of them. Tell them you’re not a common criminal. You were in an accident, and that’s all it was. An accident. Joe, they’ll listen. I know they will.

**Joe.** No, Anna . . .

**Anna** (eagerly). All you have to do is tell them and they’ll go away. It’s not like you committed a crime or anything. You were speeding. Everybody speeds. You hit an old man, and he died. He walked right in front—

26 **Joe.** They’re not asking what I did, Anna. **Anna** (pleading). Joe, please. Look at me. I’m so frightened . . . You have to tell them.

**Joe.** Anna, we have our freedom. If we beg for it, then it’s gone. Don’t you see that?

**Anna.** (shouting). No!

[He comes to her and grips her, and speaks to her with his face inches from hers.]

27 **Joe.** How can I tell it to you? Listen, Anna, we’re only little people, but we have certain rights. Judy’s gonna learn about them in school in a couple of years . . . and they’ll tell her that no one can take them away from her. She’s got to be able to believe that. They include the right to be different. Well, a group of our neighbors have decided that we have to get out of here because they think we’re different. They think we’re not nice. (Strongly.) Do we have to smile in their faces and tell them we are nice? We don’t have to win the right to be free! It’s the same as running away, Anna. It’s staying on their terms, and if we can’t stay here on our terms, then there are no more places to stay anywhere. For you—for me—for Judy—for anyone, Anna.

[She sees it now and she almost smiles, but the tears

are running down her cheeks and it's difficult to smile. Joe kisses her forehead.]

**Joe** (quietly). Now we'll wait for them.

[Anna goes slowly to a chair and sits in it. Mrs. Blake rocks rhythmically on her rocking chair. Joe stands firm at one side of the room and they wait in  
29 silence. Suddenly the ticking of the clock on the mantelpiece thunders in our ears and the monotonous beat of it is all we hear. They wait. Anna looks at Joe and then speaks softly.]

**Anna.** Joe. My hands are shaking. I don't want them to shake.

[Joe walks over to her, stands over her strongly, and clasps both her hands together. Then he holds them in his till they are still. The clock ticks on, and now we cut to it. It reads ten after seven. Dissolve to a duplicate of the clock which now reads quarter after seven. Cut to long shot of room as we begin to hear  
30 The rocking rocks. The clock ticks. The trampling grows louder. Joe stands in the center of the room, hard and firm. Then he turns to his mother and speaks gently and softly.]

**Joe.** Go inside, Mother.

**Mrs. Blake** (slowly). No, Joe. I'm staying here. I want to watch you. I want to hear you. I want to be proud.

[She continues to rock and now the trampling noise reaches a crescendo and then stops. For a moment there is silence, absolute silence, and then we hear a single angry voice.]

**Charlie Denton** (shouting). Joseph Blake! (There is a chorus of shouts and a swelling of noise.) Joseph Blake . . . come out here!

[The noise from outside grows in volume. Inside only the rocking chair moves.]

**First Man** (shouting). Come out of that house!

[The noise, the yelling of the crowd, continues to grow. Inside the room no one gives a signal that they have heard.]

**Second Man** (shouting). We want you, Joseph Blake!

**Frank Morrison** (shouting). Come out—or we'll drag you out!

[The yelling continues, grows louder. Still the Blakes do not move. Then suddenly a rock smashes through the window. Glass sprays to the floor. The pitch of the noise outside rises even more. Joe begins to walk firmly to the door.]

**Anna** (softly). Joe . . .

[But he doesn't hear her. He gets to the door and flings it open violently and steps outside. As he does,  
31 the shouting, which has reached its highest pitch, stops instantly and from deafening noise we plunge into absolute silence, broken only by the steady creaking of the rocking chair inside. Joe stands there in front of his house like a rock. Now for the first time we see the crowd. The camera plays over the silent faces watching him—the faces of the men and women and children. The Morrisons are directly in front, Charlie Denton is further back. Mrs. Carson is there. And far to the rear we see Arthur Hayes and Phyllis. Still the silence holds. Then, little by little, the people begin to speak. At first we only hear single voices from different parts of the crowd.]

**First Man** (shouting). Look at him, standing there like he owns the block!

[There is a chorus of ad-lib<sup>1</sup> approvals.]

32 **Second Man** (shouting). Who do you think you are, busting in where decent people live?

1. *ad-lib* (ād lib'): spontaneous; unrehearsed.

29

Loud ticking of clock is outward expression of "thunder" in hearts of Sycamore Street residents.

30

Thundering of clock replaced by thunderous trampling as mob draws near.

31

**Suspense.** Sudden lull in noise effectively emphasizes power of Joe's presence and creates tension.

32

**Irony.** Members of mob, not Blakes, are "busting in where decent people live."



33

Strength of numbers cheers members of mob, and they find humor in contemplated exercise of their power.

34

Charlie Denton has been an instigator of action from start. It was he who told everyone of Joe's prison record.

35

Irony. Procedure, anything but polite, has not been quiet either. However, implies violence if Joe refuses.

36

Irony. Frank thinks of mob action as "fair and square." Verbal irony emphasizes his one-sided view of fairness.

37

In what way is Joe's stand more than mob bargained for? Mob planned to run Joe out, not murder him. Mob never considered actions from Joe's perspective or what kind of person Joe really is; expected him to accept terms and leave.

38

Frank tries to shift responsibility back to group as he says "Let's get him." But Joe makes it clear that Frank must be first.

[Another chorus of approvals. Joe stands like a fierce and powerful statue.]

**First Woman** (shouting). Why don't you go live with your own kind . . . in a gutter somewhere?

[Another chorus of approvals. The camera moves about catching the eagerness, the mounting temper of the crowd, then the shame and anguish of Arthur Hayes, then the giant strength of Joe]

**First Man** (shouting). Your limousine is waiting, Mr. Blake. You're taking a one-way trip!

33 [There are a few laughs at this, and now the crowd, although not moving forward, is a shouting mass again. Joe still waits quietly.]

34 **Charlie Denton** (shouting). Well, what are we waiting for? Let's get him!

[The intensity of the noise grows and the mob begins to move forward. Then, with a tremendous roar, Frank Morrison stops them.]

**Frank** (roaring). Quiet! Everybody shut up.

[The noise dies down gradually.]

**Frank** (to crowd). Now listen to me! This thing is gonna be handled the way we planned at the meeting.

[Roger, standing next to Frank, looks at him adoringly. Chris holds Clarice's hand and looks around calmly.]

**Clarice** (loud). That's right! It's what we agreed on.

35 **Frank** (shouting). This man here is gonna be asked politely and quietly to pack his things and get his family out of here. We don't have to

tell him why. He knows that. He's gonna be given a chance to leave right now. If he's got any brains in his head he'll be out in one hour—and nobody'll touch him or his house. If he hasn't—

[There is a low-throated, ominous murmur from the crowd.]

36 **Frank**. Right! This thing is gonna be done fair and square. (Turning to Joe.) What d'ya say, Mr. Blake?

[Joe looks at him for a long time. The crowd waits silently. Arthur Hayes lowers his head and clenches his fists, and looks as if he wants to be sick. The crowd waits. When Joe speaks, it is with a controlled fury that these people have never heard before. He speaks directly to Frank.]

**Joe**. I spit on your fairness! (The crowd gasps. Joe waits, then he thunders out.) I own this house and God gave me the right to live in it. The man who tries to take it away from me is going to have to climb over a pile of bones to do it. You good people of Sycamore Street are going to have to kill me tonight! Are you ready, Mr. Morrison? Don't bother to be fair. You're the head man here. Be first!

[The crowd, rocked back on its heels, doesn't know what to do. Behind Joe, in the house, we see framed in the doorway the rocking chair moving steadily, and Anna standing next to it. Frank is stunned by this outburst. He calls for action. But not with the force he displayed earlier.]

38 **Frank**. You heard him, everybody. . . . Let's get him.

**Joe**. I asked for you first, Mr. Morrison!

**Frank** (shouting). Listen to me! Let's go, men!

[But the crowd is no longer moving as a whole. Some

of them are still strongly with Frank, including Charlie, the first man, the second man, and several of the others. But others are not so sure of themselves now.]

**Charlie** (roaring). Don't let him throw you, Frank! He asked for it. Let's give it to him!

[Joe looks only at Frank. Waits calmly for him.]

**39 Frank** (roaring). Come on!

[He takes a step forward, but the people behind him don't follow. He turns to them.]

**Frank.** What's the matter with you people?

**40 Joe.** They're waiting for you, Mr. Morrison.

[Frank whirls and faces him and they look long and hard at each other. Cut to Charlie Denton at rear of crowd. He has a stone in his hand.]

**Charlie** (shouting). Let's start it off, Frankie boy.

[He flings the stone. We hear it hit and drop to the ground. The crowd gasps. Cut to Joe. There is blood running down the side of his head. He stands there

**41 firmly.** Cut to Arthur Hayes. He looks up in horror, and then a transformation comes over him. He seems to grow taller and broader. His face sets strongly and he begins to stride forward, elbowing people aside. Phyllis knows. She clings to him to pull him back.]

**Phyllis** (screaming). Artie . . . Artie . . . don't . . .

**42** [But he breaks loose from her and pushes forward. Whoever is in his way is knocked aside, and finally he reaches Joe. He looks up at Joe. Then he turns and

**43 stands next to him. He takes off his eyeglasses and flings them into the crowd.]**

**Arthur** (strong). Throw the next stone at me, neighbors. I live here too!

[Now the crowd is uncertain as the two men stand together and the blood runs down Joe's face. Frank tries to rally them. During his next lines we shoot through the open door into the living room. Mrs. Blake gets up from her rocking chair and takes Anna's hand. Together they walk to the front door, come outside, and stand proudly behind Joe and Arthur.]

**44 Frank.** Listen to me! Pay attention, you people. Let's remember what we came here to do . . . and why! This man is garbage! He's cluttering up our street. He's wrecking our neighborhood. We don't want him here. We agreed, every last man and woman of us . . . we agreed to throw him out! Are we gonna let him stop us? If we do—you know what'll happen.

[Mrs. Blake and Anna are out of the house now. They wait, along with Joe and Arthur. The crowd

**45 listens.** Frank shouts on, running from person to person as the crowd begins ashamedly to drift away. Christopher clings to Frank's jacket, and begins to sob.]

**Frank.** You know what Sycamore Street'll be like. I don't have to tell you. How do we know who we'll be rubbing elbows with next? Listen, where are you going? We're all together in this!

**46** What about our kids? Listen to me, people. Our kids'll be playing and going to school with his. How do you like that, neighbors? Makes you a little sick, doesn't it? Come back here! I'm telling you we've got to do this! Come back here!

[But the crowd continues to drift away. Finally only the Morrisons and Phyllis Hayes are left in the street. Joe and his family, and Arthur, watch them, proudly. Roger looks at his bewildered father and

**39**

Frank continues to call for crowd to follow him, but initial hesitation gives them time to think. Moment gone when they would have followed.

**40**

Joe succeeds in dividing Frank from support. If Frank steps forward now and fights, he might reclaim group support.

**41**

**Climax.** Charlie's extreme act makes Arthur realize he must stand up for what he believes in, thereby determining outcome of action.

**42**

Arthur "breaks loose" from Phyllis, physically and psychologically, to stand beside Joe.

**43**

Throwing his glasses is act of defiance on Arthur's part. Indicates his willingness to fight neighbors if necessary.

**44**

**Characterization.** Frank pleads with neighbors but does not sound or act quite the "man" he was supposed to be.

**45**

Dignity and courage of Blakes and Arthur diffuse crowds' hatred, prove stronger than Frank's irrational rhetoric.

**46**

**Irony.** Worst that could happen to the children is for them to imitate their parents' behavior.

47

**Resolution.** Arthur asserts moral leadership; Blakes remain; Phyllis joins her husband.

### READING CHECK

1. In Joe Blake's house (p. 467).
2. Mrs. Carson (p. 469).
3. Resist (p. 471).
4. Speeding, Joe accidentally struck and killed a man (p. 472).
5. Arthur Hayes (p. 475).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Shown as loving father adored by daughter. 1b. Joe imprisoned for auto accident.
2. To defend rights.
3. Clock's ticking, marching feet, mob's shouting.
- 4a. Once timid and hesitant, stands heroically at Joe's side.
- 4b. Responses may vary. Arthur has shown sympathy for Joe.
- 5a. Individual's right to be different. 5b. Individual's. 5c. Arthur and Joe are shown sympathetically; Frank treated as overbearing bully.
6. Responses may vary.

### LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Frank asks Arthur, "You know what tonight is, don't you?" (p. 450). Topic of kids dumping garbage on Blakes' lawn is raised at dinner (p. 452).
2. Act Two: Phyllis says action is against "that house next door" (p. 461); Arthur speaks of "throwing a man out of his own home" (p. 462).
3. Act Two: Phyllis says he was "in jail for four years" (p. 462). Act Three: Anna says Joe's jail term resulted from accident (p. 472). Joe depicted as victim of circumstance who has paid for mistake.
4. Helps sustain interest, suspense.

*then he turns away, takes Clarice's hand, and his father is no longer the greatest guy in the world. Frank looks down at the sobbing Christopher, and picks him up and walks slowly off. Clarice and Roger follow. The Blakes turn to go into their house, leaving Arthur on the porch. And standing alone, starkly in the middle of the street, is Phyllis. Arthur looks at her as she stands, heartbreakingly alone, for a long time.]*

- 47 **Arthur** (sadly). Well, what are you standing there for? My neighbor's head is bleeding!

*[And then, slowly, knowing that Arthur is no longer a grown-up child, Phyllis moves forward into Joseph Blake's house.]*

*[Fade out.]*

### Reading Check

1. Where does most of Act Three take place?
2. Who brings the news to Joe about what his neighbors intend to do?
3. What does Joe decide to do?
4. What did Joe do to get sent to prison?
5. Who joins Joe in resisting the mob?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

- 1a. Near the beginning of the act, how is sympathy created for Joe Blake? b. What do you learn from Anna's words that indicates Joe is not a dangerous criminal?
2. What reason does Joe give for resisting the mob?
3. What sounds in Act Three help create suspense?
- 4a. How does Arthur Hayes change in Act Three? b. How have you been prepared for the change?
- 5a. What issue about human rights does the play explore? b. What stand does the play take on the issue? c. How do you know?
6. Has the play reinforced or changed your opinion about the issue? Explain.

### Literary Elements

#### Exposition

**Exposition** is the part of a play that provides the audience with important information. Many plays provide a good deal of exposition at the beginning. Reginald Rose, however, deliberately controls the exposition so that only gradually does the audience arrive at a full understanding of the situation.

- 1 Find expository passages in Act One that provide hints of what is to happen at 7:15 P.M.
- 2 Find passages in Act Two that provide more information.
- 3 Find passages in Acts Two and Three that provide information about Joe Blake. How does the exposition in Act Three make Joe a sympathetic character?
- 4 Why might Reginald Rose have decided to present exposition gradually rather than all at once?



## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify the changes in Arthur Hayes's behavior. Also, have them cite examples of foreshadowing which hint at these changes.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Students might consider whether eventual outcome of the play would have been different if Frank had stepped forward to fight Joe at the crucial moment. Have students rewrite the ending of the play based on this assumption. Stu-

dents who liked this play might also want to read Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery* and compare the themes in a paper or oral report.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Emotionally Loaded Language

Emotionally loaded language can be used to present a favorable or unfavorable impression of someone or something. For example, a person who liked Arthur Hayes might call him "a cautious man," but someone who had a low opinion of him might describe him as "a timid man" or even "a pipsqueak." In Act One, Frank Morrison refers to himself and his neighbors as "the majority," but in Act Three Joe Blake calls them a "mob."

- 1 Find other examples of emotionally loaded language used to present a favorable or an unfavorable impression. Rewrite each example to
- 2 present the opposite impression. Then write a sentence presenting Frank Morrison in a favorable light and another sentence presenting him in an unfavorable light.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Analyzing a Play's Theme

In Act Three, Joe Blake tells his wife:

Listen, Anna, we're only little people, but we have certain rights. Judy's gonna learn about them in school in a couple of years . . . and they'll tell her that no one can take them away from her. She's got to be able to believe that. They include the right to be different. Well, a group of our neighbors have decided that we have to get out of here because they think we're different. They think we're not nice. . . . Do we have to smile in their faces and tell them we are nice? We don't have to win the right to be free! It's the same as running away, Anna. It's staying on their terms, and if we can't stay on our terms, then there are no places to stay anywhere. For you—for me—for Judy—for anyone, Anna.

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the Writing About Literature section on p. 838.

Write an essay showing how this passage brings out the play's theme—its underlying idea. Then show how the theme is also brought out by other characters' words and actions.

## About the Author

### Reginald Rose (1920– )

The New York Times *Encyclopedia of Television* calls Reginald Rose "one of the outstanding playwrights to emerge from TV's drama era" of the 1950s. He wrote his first television play, *Bus to Nowhere*, in 1951. Rose's other television plays include *The Sacco-Vanzetti Story*, *A Man Is Ten Feet Tall* (which starred Sidney Poitier), and *Twelve Angry Men*. He adapted *Twelve Angry Men* (the members of a jury) into a successful motion picture starring Henry Fonda.

Rose has written scripts for a number of other films. In 1961, he created and wrote *The Defenders*, a television series about a father and son who are partners in a law practice.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. Examples: Frank Morrison's word "pussyfooting" (p. 454) might become "deliberation" or "careful consideration"; "The frightening noise of tramping feet" (p. 457) might become "the steady footsteps of determined people"; Phyllis Hayes calls neighborhood people "respectable" (p. 462), but a possible substitute might be "sanctimonious"; Anna Blake calls her husband's crime an "accident" (p. 472); someone else might call it "an act of criminal carelessness."

2. Sentences about Morrison will vary.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Encourage students to include a clear statement of the theme of *Thunder on Sycamore Street*. Their answers will vary but should relate to people's right to be different despite pressure to conform. Students' examples of characters' words and actions will vary according to how statements of theme are worded. After checking students' work, you might ask the writers of the best essays to read them aloud.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rose and playwright Brian Clark wrote the screenplay for the 1981 movie *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* Based on Clark's play, the story is about a sculptor (played by Richard Dreyfuss) who is paralyzed from the neck down in an auto accident. Rose is noted for his treatment of social issues and his concern for the moral choices of the individual.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to think about why the theater was so popular in Shakespeare's time. Remind them that there was no film or television, and fewer people could read. Ask students to name other possible reasons for the theater's success.

## PRESENTATION

*Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most frequently performed, discussed, and taught of Shakespeare's plays; the innocence, youth, and emotional intensity of its two protagonists have earned the play a place in the hearts of readers,

viewers, and scholars for nearly four hundred years. Another factor that might have contributed to its success is the tremendous amount of poetry included. The play's poetry and language reflect the vogue of sonnets during the late 1500s; the play itself begins with a sonnet.

## ROMEO AND JULIET

1

The play has been the basis for a symphonic tone poem by Tchaikovsky, an opera *Romeo et Juliette* by Gounod, a cold-war spoof *Romanoff and Juliet* by Peter Ustinov, and a movie *West Side Story* with music by Leonard Bernstein. *Romeo and Juliet* is available in several film versions, including one from 1936, an MGM release directed by George Cukor; one from 1954, directed by Renato Castellani; and one from 1968, directed by Franco Zeffirelli.

2

Story well known in Italian, French, and English versions. Shakespeare's play based on a long poem *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet* (1562), by Arthur Brooke, who mentioned having seen a play on the subject.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

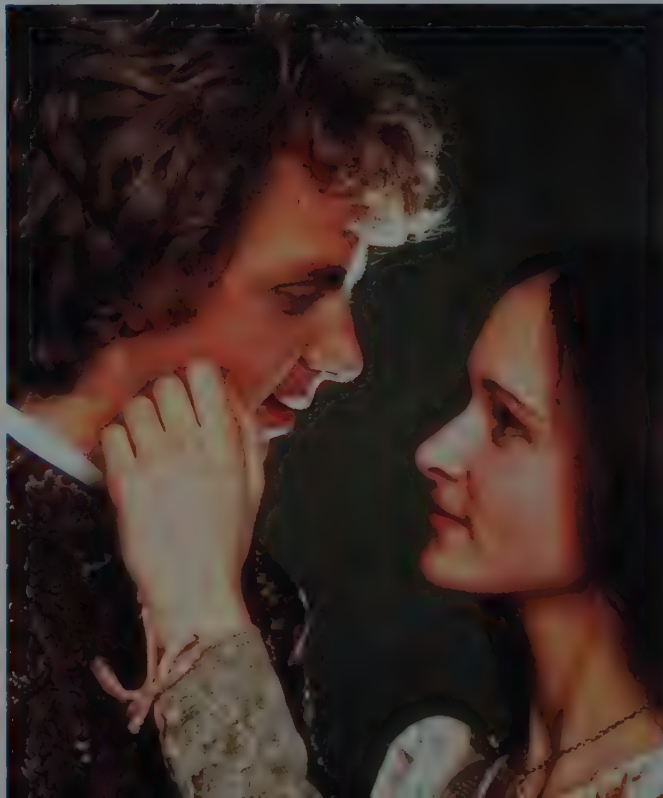
The subject of *Romeo and Juliet* is young and passionate love. The actors and actresses who play the characters are not always young, but the story succeeds regardless of the ages of the players.

## Romeo and Juliet

*Romeo and Juliet* is probably the most popular romantic tragedy in the English-speaking world. It has had a long and successful stage history (nearly four hundred years), and in our own time has been produced on film and on television as well as on stage. So powerful is Shakespeare's concept of the "star-crossed lovers" that his tragedy has inspired composers, artists, and choreographers to create original works based on the play.

Shakespeare did not invent the story of Romeo and Juliet. It was already well known and popular when he came to write the play sometime around 1594. But in Shakespeare's hands the narrative was skillfully transformed into a magnificent poetic drama, the most lyrical of the tragedies Shakespeare was to write.

A scene from the 1985 BBC-TV production of *Romeo and Juliet*.



## Shakespeare's Life

Comparatively little is known about Shakespeare's early life. He was born in 1564 in Stratford-on-Avon, a small English town in Warwickshire. He married

- 3 Anne Hathaway when he was eighteen and she twenty-six. The couple had three children.
- 4 Sometime in his twenties Shakespeare went to London and became involved in the theater, acting in and writing plays. In 1594 he became a shareholder in a company of actors called the Lord Chamberlain's Men. Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* for this company. When
- 5 James became King of England in 1603, he renamed the Chamberlain's Men the "King's Men." About 1610 Shakespeare retired to
- 6 Stratford-on-Avon, where he died on April 23, 1616.

Statue of Shakespeare in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey, London.



- 3 Nobody knows how he supported his family before going to London. John Aubrey, seventeenth-century biographer, says in his *Lives* that Shakespeare was a schoolmaster.

- 4 Some say Shakespeare began his career by joining the Queen's Men, an acting company visiting Stratford in 1587, to replace an actor who had just been killed.

- 5 From July 1596 to March 1597, group was called "Lord of Hunsdon's Servants"; name was again changed to "Lord Chamberlain's Men" when the young Lord of Hunsdon officially took his father's title as Lord Chamberlain.

- 6 For a dramatist to keep ties with one acting company for such a long time was quite unusual.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

**Exploring the Subject**  
Poets' Corner contains the graves of many of England's great writers, but Shakespeare, probably the greatest, is actually buried at Holy Trinity Church in Stratford-on-Avon.



7

Eight to ten percent of London's citizens attended plays each week between 1595 and 1605.

8

In 1597, an unauthorized version of *Romeo and Juliet* appeared. It probably was recorded by a stenographer in the audience.

9

Although equipment was not elaborate, there were many stage properties. They were used to suggest setting: a bed meant a bedchamber; chairs, a living room, etc.

10

Plays normally took about two hours, actors delivering their lines at a rapid rate. The audience had to listen very carefully.

11

Other than in ancient Roman theater, where the women who appeared on stage were often slaves, there is little mention of women in the theater prior to 1660.

12

Actors were required to be skilled in sword fighting and dance and to have stamina enough for long fight or dance scenes.

## Shakespeare's Theater

In Shakespeare's day London had several theaters, all well attended. Competition among rival theaters was keen. Because literary property was not protected by

8

law, it was common for popular plays to be pirated.

The sixteenth-century theater resembled the open courtyard of an inn. There was no roof. The stage was a large platform without a curtain or stage setting. At the back of the stage were two large doors. In the center of the platform was a recess or inner stage, which was usually concealed by a curtain. In *Romeo and Juliet* this inner stage could serve as Friar Laurence's cell or Juliet's tomb. Above the recess was a balcony. In *Romeo and Juliet* it would serve for the garden scene.

Since there was no front curtain, the actors had to make their entrances and exits in full view of the audience. There was no scenery and no artificial lighting. Plays were held in the afternoon. In order to create atmosphere, playwrights and actors had to rely on words and actions. In the great balcony scene in *Romeo and Juliet*, the feeling of a moonlit night is evoked by the language. The lack of elaborate equipment had other advantages. Because no scenery had to be changed, the action of the play could flow more quickly.

9

10

11

12

There were no actresses in Shakespeare's day. The young women's parts were played by boys. There were usually about fifteen full members in a company of players, who shared in the profits of their performances. In such a small company, certain roles became specialized, and playwrights frequently wrote parts tailored to the talents of their star actors.

The audience was made up of individuals from every walk of life. Few members of the audience could afford to buy seats. Most spectators stood in the yard around the platform stage. They were known as groundlings. The well-to-do customers sat in covered galleries around the stage.

The audience demanded action and excitement. They liked their action gory. The majority of people could not read, but they loved the music of good language. They responded to the dignity and grandeur of poetry, and they liked puns and word games. Shakespeare was able to satisfy the many different tastes of his audience. In *Romeo and Juliet* he included vigorous action, boisterous humor, and splendid poetry.



A drawing of the reconstruction of the second Globe Theater by C. Walter Hodges. Many of Shakespeare's plays were produced at the first Globe Theater, which was destroyed by fire in 1613. No playhouses from Shakespeare's time have survived.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The structure of the second Globe Theater, built in 1614, resembled that of the first one destroyed by fire a year earlier. The large platform extending from the main structure of the theater served as the stage where most of a play's action occurred. This platform is often called the apron. Near the center of the floor of the apron stage was a trapdoor frequently used to create the effect of the dead returning from the grave. At upstage center was an inner stage (recess) which often served as a bed-chamber, throne room, tomb, or other enclosed area. On each side of the recess was a large door through which actors would enter and exit. Behind the doors was the tiring house, which served as a dressing room for the actors and a storage room for stage properties and costumes. Above the recess was a small platform where musicians would play to enhance the atmosphere of the drama. In some plays, this platform functioned as the roof of a castle where sentries stood to guard against danger. At the top of the stage structure was a room called the hut, where sound effects were created. For example, cannonballs were rolled across the floor of the hut to suggest the sounds of thunder. Often cannons were fired to create sounds and smoke of battle. In fact, the firing of a cannon during a performance of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* caused the fire that destroyed the first Globe Theater in 1613.

Although the covered gallery seats around the stage of the Globe Theater could accommodate approximately 1500 spectators, few people could afford these seats. Most of the audience stood in the yard around the apron stage. This area was called the pit, and the people who paid a penny to stand there and watch the play were known as groundlings.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate an understanding of how the feud between the Montagues and Capulets affects the opening act. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Literary Elements** exercise on p. 507 gives practice in recognizing **personification**.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to name the most famous lovers in English literature. Probably every student knows the names of Romeo and Juliet. Note that, although their story did not end happily, we can all learn important things from it.

## PREREADING FOCUS

One of the key elements in creating lifelike **characters** is that of character consistency. Shakespeare reveals various traits (Romeo is impulsive; Capulet is willful) early in the play so that actions by individuals in later scenes will be both consistent and believable. Ask students to watch closely for early **characterization** and to note later repetitions of such traits and how they relate to the **plot**.

## Romeo and Juliet

After students have read the play, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion and analysis of **characterization**, **imagery**, **plot**, and **theme**.

1

Name of one of two families featured in play. House of Montague includes not only extended family but also the servants of the household.

2

Name of other family in play. Much action in the play takes place inside Capulet household.

3

Will Kempe played Peter from 1594 to 1600. Kempe specialized in low comedy and was famous for dancing jigs after each performance.

4

Setting is fourteenth-century Italy, but actors in Shakespeare's time would have worn Elizabethan costumes.

# Romeo and Juliet

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

## Characters

### 1 The Montagues

Lord Montague  
Lady Montague  
Romeo, son of Montague  
Benvolio, nephew of Montague  
and friend of Romeo  
Balthasar, servant of Romeo  
Abraham, servant of Montague

### 2 The Capulets

Lord Capulet  
Lady Capulet  
Juliet, daughter of Capulet  
Tybalt, nephew of Lady Capulet  
Nurse to Juliet  
3 Peter, servant of the Nurse  
Sampson } servants of Capulet  
Gregory }  
An Old Man of the Capulet family

Prince Escalus, ruler of Verona  
Mercutio, kinsman of the Prince and friend of Romeo  
Friar Laurence, a Franciscan priest  
Friar John, another Franciscan priest  
Count Paris, a young nobleman, kinsman of the Prince  
Apothecary - *druggist*  
Page to Paris  
Chief Watchman  
Three Musicians  
An Officer

Citizens of Verona, Kinsfolk of both houses, Maskers, Guards, Watchmen, and Attendants

### 4 The Time: The fourteenth century

The Place: Verona; Mantua, in northern Italy



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

The play opens with a fight between servants of the Capulets and those of the Montagues. With the feud between these families as a backdrop, we meet Romeo. Romeo is hopelessly lovesick for Rosaline, but she does not love him.

In an effort to make him forget Rosaline, Mercutio and Benvolio talk Romeo, sole heir of the family of Montague, into disguising himself and attending a party in the house of the Capulets.

## PRESENTATION

Before students start to read aloud the opening lines of Sampson and Gregory, the Capulet servants, comment on the boisterous spirit of their puns and boasts. You might compare them to wisecracking sports fans spoiling for a quarrel

## Prologue

1 [From the back of the stage the Chorus<sup>o</sup> enters to introduce and explain the theme of the play.]

**Chorus.** Two households, both alike in dignity,<sup>o</sup> A  
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene, B  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,<sup>o</sup> A  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean. B  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes C  
A pair of star-crossed<sup>o</sup> lovers take their life, D  
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows C  
Do with their death bury their parents' strife. D  
The fearful passage of their death-marked love, E  
And the continuance of their parents' rage, F  
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove, E  
Is now the two hours' traffic<sup>o</sup> of our stage; F  
The which if you with patient ears attend, G  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.<sup>o</sup> G

## Act One

### Scene 1

[Verona. A public place. Enter Sampson and Gregory, of the House of Capulet, with swords and bucklers.<sup>o</sup>]

**Sampson.** Gregory, on my word, we'll not carry coals.<sup>o</sup>

1 **Gregory.** No, for then we should be colliers.<sup>o</sup>

**Sampson.** I mean, an<sup>o</sup> we be in choler,<sup>o</sup> we'll draw.

**Gregory.** Aye, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar.<sup>o</sup>

**Sampson.** I strike quickly, being moved.

**Gregory.** But thou are not quickly moved to strike.

**Sampson.** A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

**Gregory.** To move is to stir, and to be valiant is to stand. Therefore if thou are moved, thou runn'st away.

**Sampson.** A dog of that house shall move me to stand. I will take the wall<sup>o</sup> of any man or maid of Montague's.

**Prologue. Chorus:** an actor who addresses the audience directly and comments on the action. 1. **dignity:** rank. 3. **mutiny:** riot. 6. **star-crossed:** doomed by unlucky stars. 12. **traffic:** business. 14. **mend:** make clearer.

S.D. (The abbreviation S.D. stands for *stage direction*.) **bucklers:** small shields. 1. **carry coals:** put up with insults. 2. **colliers:** coal-dealers. 3. **an:** if. **choler:** anger. 4. **collar:** hangman's noose. The characters are punning on the words *collier*, *choler*, and *collar*. For a discussion of puns, see page 586. 10. **take the wall:** go to the inside of the sidewalk, where the ground was cleaner.

## Prologue

1

Written in the form of a **sonnet**, a popular verse form when the play was written in 1595, the Prologue performs a vital dramatic function by allowing the audience to foresee events. Before Romeo and Juliet have even met, the audience knows their love is doomed. Their families are caught up in a quarrel that will be reconciled only with the deaths of the young lovers. Although some readers might at first think this knowledge will spoil the story, enjoyment actually will be increased because the audience will see a significance in events that is hidden from the characters themselves.

2

Use to answer study question 1a, p. 505.

3

Use to answer study question 1b, p. 505.

4

Shakespeare's actors would be hard pressed to perform the play in two hours. Modern, uncut productions usually run closer to three hours.

## Act One Scene 1

1

**Pun.** A favorite Elizabethan comic device. Sampson's and Gregory's puns are deliberately quite bad. Shakespeare's audience probably groaned.

with fans of an opposing team. However, the ancient feud of the Capulets and Montagues is a deadly game. The Capulet servants' taunts soon lead to a sword battle with Abraham and Balthasar, servants of Montague. Hot-tempered Tybalt counters Benvolio's effort to stop the

fight; other Capulets and Montagues enter the fray, along with Citizens and Peace Officers; only the timely intervention of Prince Escalus quells the disturbance.

You may need to remind students to use the footnotes and to paraphrase for a better under-

standing of the lines. Rotate reading roles in each scene so that every student will have at least one opportunity to read. Coach students in expressive reading. Quicken the pace as students become better acquainted with characters and more excited about the action.

2

**Allusion.** By alluding to I Peter 3:7 ("Giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel"), Sampson plays on Gregory's proverbial language.

3

Gregory is suggesting women should not be victims in quarrel between men.

4

No reason is given for the feud between the Montagues and Capulets. The initial cause may have been trivial and all but forgotten. What is important is that the vendetta feeds on itself and continues unabated.

5

Sampson wants to provoke the Montague servants into striking first blow; this provocation leads to fight which fuels old antagonisms and prepares way for tragedy.

6

**Convention.** Sampson's *aside* is intended to be heard only by Gregory and audience, not the Montague servants.

7

After Sampson's bragging, servant's reluctance to actually fight creates a comic effect.

8

"One of my master's kinsmen" refers to the hot-tempered Tybalt. With his arrival, Gregory and Sampson summon up enough courage to fight.

**Gregory.** That shows thee a weak slave, for the weakest goes to the wall.<sup>12</sup>

**2 Sampson.** 'Tis true, and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall. Therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall and thrust his maids to the wall.

15

**3 Gregory.** The quarrel is between our masters and us their men.

**Sampson.** 'Tis all one, I will show myself a tyrant. When I have fought with the men, I will be cruel with the maids. I will cut off their heads.

**Gregory.** The heads of the maids?

**Sampson.** Aye, the heads of the maids, or their maidenheads—take it in what sense thou wilt.

20

**Gregory.** They must take it in sense that feel it.

**Sampson.** Me they shall feel while I am able to stand. And 'tis known I am a pretty piece of flesh.

**Gregory.** 'Tis well thou art not fish. If thou hadst, thou hadst been poor John.<sup>25</sup> Draw thy tool. Here comes two of the house of Montagues.

25

[Enter Abraham and Balthasar, servants of Montague.]

**4 Sampson.** My naked weapon is out. Quarrel—I will back thee.

**Gregory.** How! Turn thy back and run?

**Sampson.** Fear me not.

**Gregory.** No, marry,<sup>30</sup> I fear thee!

**Sampson.** Let us take the law of our sides.<sup>31</sup> Let them begin.

**Gregory.** I will frown as I pass by, and let them take it as they list.<sup>32</sup>

**5 Sampson.** Nay, as they dare. I will bite my thumb<sup>33</sup> at them, which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

**Abraham.** Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

30

**Sampson.** I do bite my thumb, sir.

**Abraham.** Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

35

**6 Sampson.** [Aside to Gregory] Is the law of our side, if I say aye?

**Gregory.** No.

**Sampson.** No, sir, I do not bite my thumb at you, sir; but I bite my thumb, sir.

40

**Gregory.** Do you quarrel, sir?

**7 Abraham.** Quarrel, sir! No, sir.

**Sampson.** But if you do, sir, I am for you. I serve as good a man as you.

**Abraham.** No better.

**Sampson.** Well, sir.

45

[Enter Benvolio, nephew of Montague.]

**8 Gregory.** [Aside to Sampson] Say "Better." Here comes one of my master's kinsmen.

**Sampson.** Yes, better sir.

12. **weakest . . . wall:** another proverb. 25. **poor John:** salted hake, an inexpensive food. 30. **marry:** by the Virgin Mary. 31. **take . . . sides:** be legally in the right. 32. **list:** please. 33. **bite my thumb:** an insulting gesture.

Have students analyze the Prince's speech (Scene 1, ll. 67–87) for dire words describing the feud and its effects. What does the Prince say will happen if the streets are ever disturbed again?

In Benvolio's conversation with the elder Montagues, students should note the transition from

the hate theme of the street brawl to the love theme of Romeo's melancholy behavior. Ask students if young people sometimes play with the idea of love, sighing over someone at a distance while they complain of Cupid's poor marksmanship (Scene 1, ll. 193–196). Perhaps Rosaline

perceives that Romeo is only infatuated, for she does not return his love. But when Romeo meets Juliet, he is no longer playing; he and Juliet fall deeply in love. Even their first dialogue is a sonnet of startling beauty, expressing love through religious **imagery** (Scene 5, ll. 90–104). If stu-

**Abraham.** You lie.

**Sampson.** Draw, if you be men. Gregory, remember thy swashing° blow.

[*They fight.*]

**9 Benvolio.** Part, fools. [*Beating down their weapons.*] Put up your swords. You know not what you do. 50

[*Enter Tybalt, hot-tempered nephew of Lady Capulet, with sword drawn.*]

**Tybalt.** What, are thou drawn among these heartless hinds?°

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

**Benvolio.** I do but keep the peace. Put up thy sword,  
Or manage it to part these men with me. 55

**10 Tybalt.** What, drawn, and talk of peace! I hate the word  
As I hate Hell, all Montagues, and thee.  
Have at thee, coward!

[*They fight.*]

[*Enter several of both houses, who join the fray; then enter Citizens and Peace Officers, with clubs.*]

**11 First Officer.** Clubs, bills, and partisans!° Strike! Beat them down!  
Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues! 60

[*Enter old Capulet in his gown, and Lady Capulet.*]

**12 Capulet.** What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

**13 Lady Capulet.** A crutch, a crutch! Why call you for a sword?

**Capulet.** My sword, I say! Old Montague is come,  
And flourishes his blade in spite of° me.

[*Enter old Montague and Lady Montague.*]

**Montague.** Thou villain Capulet!—Hold me not, let me go. 65

**14 Lady Montague.** Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

[*Enter Prince Escalus, with Attendants. At first no one hears him.*]

**Prince.** Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,  
Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel°—

**9 Characterization.** Benvolio, while of the house of Montague, is a peacemaker, reluctant to take part in what he believes to be senseless quarrel. Benvolio's name suggests goodness. In Italian, *bene* means "good."

**10 Conflict.** Again audience has no notion of what quarrel is about. These young men fighting mostly to prove their manhood.

**11** Quarrel between Capulets and Montagues is old story to officers.

**12** Capulet's call for the long sword reveals his age. Younger men used the rapier. The old-fashioned long sword required much strength.

**13** Old Capulet cannot wait to get into fight. Wife restrains him, insisting he has more use for a crutch than a sword.

**14** Lady Montague also attempts to restrain her husband.

49. **swashing:** slashing. 52. **heartless hinds:** cowardly servants. 59. **bills . . . partisans:** different kinds of spears. 64. **in spite of:** to spite. 68. **neighbor-stained steel:** swords stained with the blood of neighbors.



dents should remark that young lovers don't really talk that way, you might ask if they could feel that way.

Use the study questions and exercises to analyze the plot development and the interplay of characters in Act One: the marriage negotiations

of Count Paris with Lord Capulet, Romeo's bold decision to attend the Capulet ball to see Rosaline, Juliet's dutiful behavior with her matchmaking mother and fond nurse, Mercutio's fine-spun dreams in contrast with Romeo's premonitions, Capulet's hospitality at the masked ball, Tybalt's

smoldering hatred of Romeo, and Romeo and Juliet's lyrical meeting. Enjoy with your students the comic situations and wordplay that brighten the drama.

15

**Metaphor.** If the fight is allowed to continue, blood will spurt like fountains.

16

Prince has had to shout to make himself heard. Finally force of his authority is felt, and everyone becomes quiet.

17

**What does the Prince say has caused these brawls?** "An airy word"—some trifling insult or careless remarks.

18

In Elizabethan England, dueling was a serious problem; in an effort to stamp it out, the government decreed that homicide resulting from dueling was punishable by death.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Bloody family conflicts, or feuds, have been an enemy to civil order as long as history has been recorded. Informed Elizabethans would have been familiar with several longstanding feuds, both in England and in Scotland. America, too, has had its share of such feuds; the most famous is that between the Hatfields and the McCoys.

Will they not hear? What ho! You men, you beasts,

That quench the fire of your pernicious rage

15 With purple fountains issuing from your veins,

On pain of torture, from those bloody hands

Throw your mistempered° weapons to the ground,

16 And hear the sentence of your movèd prince.

17 Three civil brawls, bred of an airy° word,

By thee, old Capulet and Montague,

Have thrice disturbed the quiet of our streets,

And made Verona's ancient citizens

Cast by their grave beseeeming ornaments°

To wield old partisans, in hands as old,

Cankered with peace, to part your cankered° hate.

If ever you disturb our streets again,

18 Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.

73. **mistempered:** ill-made and ill-used. 75. **airy:** light. 79. **grave . . . ornaments:** dignified ornaments of peace, suitable to aged citizens. 81. **cankered:** rusted, corroded.

A scene from the 1985 BBC-TV production of *Romeo and Juliet*.



For this time, all the rest depart away.  
 You, Capulet, shall go alone with me,  
 And, Montague, come you this afternoon,  
 To know our further pleasure in this case,  
 To old Freetown, our common judgment place.  
 Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

85

[*Exeunt*° all but Montague, Lady Montague, and Benvolio.]

**Montague.** Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad°

90

Speak, nephew, were you by when it began?

**Benvolio.** Here were the servants of your adversary

And yours close fighting ere I did approach.

I drew to part them. In the instant came

19 The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,

Which as he breathed defiance to my ears,

He swung about his head and cut the winds,

20 Who, nothing hurt withal,° hissed him in scorn.

While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,

21 Came more and more, and fought on part and part

Till the Prince came, who parted either part.

100

**Lady Montague.** Oh, where is Romeo? Saw you him today?

Right glad I am he was not at this fray.

22 **Benvolio.** Madam, an hour before the worshiped sun

Peered forth the golden window of the east,

A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad,

Where, underneath the grove of sycamore

That westward rooteth from the city's side,

So early walking did I see your son.

Towards him I made; but he was ware° of me,

And stole into the covert° of the wood.

I, measuring his affections by my own,

That most are busied when they're most alone,

Being one too many by my weary self,

Pursued my humor,° not pursuing his,

And gladly shunned who gladly fled from me.

105

**Montague.** Many a morning hath he there been seen,

With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,

Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs.

But all so soon as the all-cheering sun

Should in the farthest east begin to draw

The shady curtains from Aurora's° bed,

120

23 Away from light steals home my heavy° son,

S.D. *Exeunt*: plural form of *Exit*. 90. *abroad*: afoot, astir. 98. *withal*: by this. 110. *ware*: aware. 111. *covert*: covering. 115. *humor*: mood. 122. *Aurora*: goddess of the dawn. 123. *heavy*: melancholy.

HW↓

19

**Characterization.** Benvolio's account of the brawl establishes Tybalt as hothead. That Tybalt is eager to fight will be important to development of the plot.

20

Wind personified as having ability to hiss in scorn at Tybalt as he swings his sword.

21

More people join both sides. Benvolio also puns on the word *part* in this report.

22

**Characterization.** Benvolio, unlike Tybalt, is sensitive to the moods and feelings of others. From him, audience learns that Romeo is troubled and melancholy. His language is highly poetic and prepares audience for Romeo's entrance.

23

**Why is Lord Montague worried about his son?** He knows Romeo has been weeping and sighing in the grove at night, then shutting himself up in darkened room at sunrise. Montague fears outcome of this mood.

Simile  
Allusion

24

**Simile.** According to Montague, Romeo is so closed up in gloom that he is like the bud attacked by a worm before the bud can display its leaves or petals.

25

Shakespeare has devoted thirty-nine lines to preparing audience for Romeo's entrance. By contrast, little or nothing is said about the other characters prior to their entrances.

26

**What do Romeo's words suggest?** Time seems to pass slowly for him.

27

Romeo's problem is classic one of frustrated lovers: unrequited love. Perhaps more Renaissance sonnets were devoted to this subject than any other.

28

**Allusion.** Refers to Cupid, Roman god of love. Cupid is often pictured as blind or blindfolded—hence, "love is blind."

And private in his chamber pens himself,  
Shuts up his windows, locks fair daylight out,  
And makes himself an artificial night.  
Black and portentous must this humor prove.  
Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

125

**Benvolio.** My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

**Montague.** I neither know it nor can learn of him.

130

**Benvolio.** Have you impórtuned° him by any means?

**Montague.** Both by myself and many other friends.

But he, his own affections' counselor,  
Is to himself—I will not say how true—

24

But to himself so secret and so close,  
So far from sounding and discovery,  
As in the bud bit with an envious° worm  
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,  
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.

135

Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,  
We would as willingly give cure as know.

25

140

[Enter Romeo in a melancholy mood.]

**Benvolio.** See where he comes. So please you, step aside.

I'll know his grievance, or be much denied.

**Montague.** I would thou wert so happy° by thy stay

To hear true shrift.° Come, madam, let's away.

[Exeunt Montague and Lady.]

145

**Benvolio.** Good morrow,° Cousin.

26

**Romeo.** Is the day so young?

**Benvolio.** But new struck nine.

**Romeo.** Aye me, sad hours seem long!

Was that my father that went hence so fast?

**Benvolio.** It was. What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?

**Romeo.** Not having that which, having, makes them short.

150

**Benvolio.** In love?

**Romeo.** Out—

**Benvolio.** Of love?

27

**Romeo.** Out of her favor where I am in love.

**Benvolio.** Alas that love,° so gentle in his view,°

Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

28

**Romeo.** Alas that love, whose view is muffled still,°

Should without eyes see pathways to his will!

Where shall we dine? Oh me! What fray was here?

131. **impórtuned:** asked insistently. 137. **envious:** hateful. 144. **happy:** fortunate. 145. **shrift:** confession. 146. **Good morrow:** Good morning. "Cousin" is a name used for any relative. 155. **love:** here, Cupid, god of love. **view:** appearance. 157. **muffled still:** always blindfolded.



- 29 Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.  
Here's much to do with hate, but more with love.  
Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!  
O anything, of nothing first create!  
O heavy lightness! Serious vanity!  
Misshapen chaos of well-seeming forms!  
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!  
Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!  
This love feel I, that feel no love in this. 160
- 30 Dost thou not laugh? 165
- Benvolio.** No, Coz,<sup>o</sup> I rather weep.  
**Romeo.** Good heart, at what? 170
- Benvolio.** At thy good heart's oppression. 175
- 31 **Romeo.** Why, such is love's transgression.  
Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast,  
Which thou wilt propagate,<sup>o</sup> to have it pressed<sup>o</sup>  
With more of thine. This love that thou has shown  
Doth add more grief to too much of mine own. 180  
Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;  
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;  
Being vexed, a sea nourished with lovers' tears.  
What is it else? A madness most discreet,  
A choking gall and a preserving sweet.  
Farewell, my coz. 185
- Benvolio.** Soft!<sup>o</sup> I will go along.  
And if you leave me so, you do me wrong.  
**Romeo.** Tut, I have lost myself, I am not here.  
This is not Romeo, he's some other where. 190
- 32 **Benvolio.** Tell me in sadness,<sup>o</sup> who is that you love? 185  
**Romeo.** What shall I groan and tell thee?  
**Benvolio.** Groan! Why, no,  
But sadly tell me who. 190
- 33 **Romeo.** Bid a sick man in sadness make his will.  
Ah, word ill urged to one that is so ill! 195
- 34 In sadness, Cousin, I do love a woman. 190
- Benvolio.** I aimed so near when I supposed you loved.  
**Romeo.** A right good mark-man! And she's fair I love.  
**Benvolio.** A right fair mark, fair Coz, is soonest hit.  
35 **Romeo.** Well, in that hit you miss. She'll not be hit  
With Cupid's arrow. She hath Dian's<sup>o</sup> wit, 195

IN CLASS

IN CLASS

IN CLASS

29 **Figurative language.** Romeo speaks in riddles, characterizing love through series of oxymorons, contraries; for example, "brawling love" and "cold fire." The speech aptly characterizes the confused state of mind of the lovesick Romeo.

30 **What question does Romeo ask Benvolio? What does it reveal about Romeo's character?** Romeo asks Benvolio why he does not laugh at his riddle-ridden speech. Shows Romeo's witty attempt to minimize personal sorrow in front of friends.

31 **Romeo defines love in various metaphors.** His lines rhyme in pairs (couplets), as do the two lines of Benvolio's reply.

32 **Suspense.** Audience, too, would like to know answer to this question, but Shakespeare delays the answer.

33 **Metaphor.** Asking him to talk about troubles is as cruel as asking a sick man to make a will.

34 **Romeo uses sadness in both of its meanings:** sorrow and seriousness.

35 **Suspense.** Continues to build as Shakespeare withholds name of Romeo's beloved.

169. **Coz:** cousin. 173. **propagate** (prɒp'ə-gāt'): increase. **pressed:** burdened 181. **Soft:** an exclamation meaning "Wait." 185. **sadness:** seriousness. 195. **Dian:** Diana was the Roman goddess of chastity, hunting, and the moon.

36

Romeo complains that the girl does not love him. She refuses to be won with words, loving glances, or expensive gifts.

37

**Repetition.** "Too fair, too wise, wisely too fair:" more of Romeo's wordplay; emphasizes Rosaline's beauty and wisdom.

38

**What is Benvolio's advice to Romeo?** If this girl is unavailable, look around for someone else.

39

Romeo rejects Benvolio's advice. He is sure that every beautiful girl will remind him of girl he loves.

40

**Couplet.** Shakespeare often ends a scene with a rhymed couplet.

## Scene 2

1

**Irony.** Capulet says that he is content to end feud with Montagues, yet from Prologue, audience knows what price he will pay before feud ends.

36

And in strong proof<sup>o</sup> of chastity well armed,  
From love's weak childish bow she lives unharmed.  
She will not stay the siege of loving terms,  
Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,  
Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold.  
Oh, she is rich in beauty, only poor  
That when she dies, with beauty dies her store.<sup>o</sup>

200

**Benvolio.** Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste?

**Romeo.** She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;  
For beauty, starved with her severity,  
Cuts beauty off from all posterity.

205

37

She is too fair, too wise, wisely too fair,  
To merit bliss by making me despair.  
She hath forsworn<sup>o</sup> to love, and in that vow  
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

210

**Benvolio.** Be ruled by me, forget to think of her.

**Romeo.** Oh, teach me how I should forget to think.

38

**Benvolio.** By giving liberty unto thine eyes.  
Examine other beauties.

**Romeo.**

'Tis the way  
To call hers exquisite, in question more.<sup>o</sup>  
These happy masks<sup>o</sup> that kiss fair ladies' brows,  
Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair.  
He that is stricken blind cannot forget  
The precious treasure of his eyesight lost.

215

39

Show me a mistress that is passing<sup>o</sup> fair,  
What doth her beauty serve but as a note  
Where I may read who passed that passing fair?<sup>o</sup>

220

40

Farewell. Thou canst not teach me to forget.

**Benvolio.** I'll pay that doctrine,<sup>o</sup> or else die in debt.

[Exeunt.]

## Scene 2

[A street. Enter Capulet with Paris, a kinsman of the Prince, and Servant.]

**Capulet.** But Montague is bound<sup>o</sup> as well as I,

1

In penalty alike, and 'tis not hard, I think,  
For men so old as we to keep the peace.

196. **proof:** armor; power. 202. **with . . . store:** She will leave no child to pass on her beauty. 209. **forsworn to:** sworn not to. 215. **in question more:** by comparing her beauty more with others. 216. **masks:** Elizabethan women wore masks to protect their faces from the sun. 220. **passing:** very. 222. **passed . . . fair:** surpassed those who are very pretty. 224. **pay that doctrine:** pay for that teaching.

1. **bound:** pledged to keep the peace.

- 2 **Paris.** Of honorable reckoning° are you both,  
And pity 'tis you lived at odds so long. 5  
But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?
- Capulet.** But saying o'er what I have said before.  
My child is yet a stranger in the world—
- 3 **She hath not seen the change of fourteen years.**  
Let two more summers wither in their pride 10  
Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.
- Paris.** Younger than she are happy mothers made.  
**Capulet.** And too soon marred are those so early made.
- 4 **The earth hath swallowed all my hopes but she,**  
She is the hopeful lady of my earth.° 15  
But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart.  
My will to her consent is but a part;  
An° she agree, within her scope° of choice
- 5 **Lies my consent and fair according° voice.**  
This night I hold an old accustomed feast, 20  
Whereto I have invited many a guest  
Such as I love, and you among the store,  
One more, most welcome, makes my number more.  
At my poor house look to behold this night  
Earth-treading stars that make dark heaven light.  
Such comfort as do lusty young men feel  
When well-appareled April on the heel  
Of limping winter treads, even such delight
- 6 **Among fresh female buds shall you this night**  
Inherit° at my house. Hear all, all see, 30  
And like her most whose merit most shall be.  
Which on more view, of many mine, being one,  
May stand in number, though in reckoning none.°  
Come, go with me. [*To Servant, giving a paper*] Go, sirrah,° trudge about  
Through fair Verona. Find those persons out 35  
Whose names are written there, and to them say  
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay. [*Exeunt Capulet and Paris.*]
- Servant.** [*Who cannot read*] Find them out whose names are written here! It is written that the  
7 shoemaker should meddle with his yard° and the tailor with his last, the fisher with his 40  
pencil and the painter with his nets; but I am sent to find those persons whose names  
are here writ, and can never find what names the writing person hath here writ. I must  
8 to the learned. In good time.°

4. **reckoning:** reputation. 15. **earth:** body, "flesh and blood." 18. **An:** if. **scope:** range. 19. **according:** agreeing.  
30. **Inherit:** have. 33. **reckoning none:** not worth considering. 34. **sirrah:** a term used in addressing servants. 39.  
**yard:** measure. The servant mixes his metaphors. He means that people ought to stick to what they can do best. 42. **In**  
**good time:** What luck! Just in time!

2  
**Characterization.** Diplomati-  
cally, Paris praises both Capulet  
and Montague; he is mature,  
sensible young man. His "suit" is  
a request to marry Capulet's  
daughter Juliet.

3  
Capulet is worried that Juliet is  
too young. Even though Elizabe-  
than children were expected to  
assume adult roles earlier than  
children today, thirteen was still  
young for marriage. Capulet  
wants Paris to wait two more  
years.

4  
**Exposition.** Juliet is Capulet's  
only surviving child, his last hope.  
Takes it for granted that he will  
arrange her marriage but wants it  
to be a loving one.

5  
**Does Capulet consider Juliet's**  
**feelings?** Yes. He claims that he  
will accept her decision.

6  
Capulet invites Paris to a party.  
Maybe Paris will like one of the  
beautiful young girls more than  
Juliet.

7  
Just as the written list is useless to  
the illiterate servant, each in this  
list has a device unsuited to his  
work.

8  
Because servant cannot read,  
someone will have to read list for  
him, and that person could be—  
in fact will be—a Montague.



Analogy

9  
What advice is Benvolio giving Romeo? A new love will cure his sad longing for old love.

10  
Analogy. Romeo compares situation to that of one insane. Such people were imprisoned like criminals in his day.

11  
Plot. Through the device of servant who cannot read, Shakespeare is about to alert Romeo and Benvolio to Capulet's upcoming party. Thus, action of play is set in motion.

12  
When Capulet has a party, he is happy to entertain all comers, except for Montagues.

13  
Name of Romeo's beloved is revealed. Rosaline never appears in play, and audience learns little about her except that she is Capulet.

[Enter Benvolio and Romeo.]

Benvolio. Tut, man, one fire burns out another's burning,  
One pain is lessened by another's anguish.  
Turn giddy, and be holp° by backward turning, 45  
One desperate grief cures with another's languish.  
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,  
9 And the rank poison of the old will die.

Romeo. Your plantain° leaf is excellent for that.  
Benvolio. For what, I pray thee?  
Romeo. For your broken° shin. 50

Benvolio. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?  
10 Romeo. Not mad, but bound more than a madman is,  
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,  
Whipped and tormented and—Godden,° good fellow.

11 Servant. God gi' godden. I pray, sir, can you read?  
Romeo. Aye, mine own fortune in my misery.  
Servant. Perhaps you have learned it without a book, but I pray, can you read anything you see? 55

Romeo. Aye, if I know the letters and the language.  
Servant. Ye say honestly. Rest you merry!° 60  
Romeo. Stay, fellow, I can read. [Reads.]

"Signior Martino and his wife and daughters; County° Anselme and his beauteous sisters;  
the lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio and his lovely nieces; Mercutio and  
his brother Valentine; mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters; my fair niece  
Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio and the lively Helena." 65

A fair assembly. Whither should they come?

Servant. Up.  
Romeo. Whither?  
Servant. To supper, to our house.  
Romeo. Whose house? 70

Servant. My master's.  
Romeo. Indeed I should have asked you that before.  
12 Servant. Now I'll tell you without asking. My master is the great rich Capulet, and if you be  
not of the House of Montagues, I pray come and crush° a cup of wine. Rest you merry!  
[Exit.] 75

Benvolio. At this same ancient° feast of Capulet's  
13 Sups the fair Rosaline whom thou so lovest,

45. holp: helped. 49. plantain: a weed used to stop bleeding. 50. broken: scratched. 54. Godden: good evening, a greeting used in the afternoon. 60. Rest you merry: God keep you merry. 62. County: Count. 74. crush: drink. 75. ancient: that is, established by tradition.

- With all the admirèd beauties of Verona.  
 Go thither, and with unattainted<sup>78</sup> eye  
 Compare her face with some that I shall show,  
 And I will make thee think thy swan a crow. 80
- 15 Romeo.** When the devout religion of mine eye  
 Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires,  
 And these, who, often drowned, could never die,  
 Transparent<sup>79</sup> heretics, be burned for liars!  
 One fairer than my love! The all-seeing sun 85  
 Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun.
- Benvolio.** Tut, you saw her fair, none else being by,  
 Herself poised<sup>80</sup> with herself in either eye.  
 But in that crystal scales<sup>81</sup> let there be weighed  
 Your lady's love against some other maid 90  
 That I will show you shining at this feast,  
 And she shall scant<sup>82</sup> show well that now seems best.
- 16 Romeo.** I'll go along, no such sight to be shown,  
 But to rejoice in splendor of mine own. [Exeunt.]

### Scene 3

[A room in Capulet's house. Enter Lady Capulet and Nurse.]

- Lady Capulet.** Nurse, where's my daughter? Call her forth to me.  
**1 Nurse.** Now, by my maidenhead at twelve year old,  
 I bade her come. What, lamb! What, ladybird!<sup>1</sup>—God forbid!—  
 Where's this girl? What, Juliet!

[Enter Juliet.]

- Juliet.** How now! Who calls? 5  
**Nurse.** Your mother.  
**Juliet.** Madam, I am here. What is your will?  
**2 Lady Capulet.** This is the matter. Nurse, give leave<sup>2</sup> awhile,  
 We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again,  
 I have remembered me, thou'st<sup>3</sup> hear our counsel. 10  
 Thou know'st my daughter's of a pretty age.  
**Nurse.** Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

78. **unattainted:** unprejudiced. 84. **Transparent:** bright. 88. **poised:** balanced. 89. **crystal scales:** Romeo's eyes.  
 92. **scant:** scarcely.

3. **ladybird:** a small insect with bright red spots; a pretty little thing. 8. **give leave:** leave us alone. 10. **thou'st:** thou shalt.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene,  
 see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 64*

### 14

Benvolio is sure that Romeo will forget about Rosaline when he sees other "beauties" at the party.

### 15

**Analogy.** Romeo compares Benvolio's statement (that other girls are more beautiful than Rosaline) to statements made by religious heretics (people who have opinions that are contrary to accepted doctrine). Later, Romeo maintains this religious **metaphor** in his approach to Juliet.

### 16

**Why does Romeo agree to go to the party?** To see Rosaline and "rejoice in splendor" of her beauty.

### Scene 3

#### 1

**Foil.** The earthy, garrulous nurse is a **foil** (contrast) for the socially proper Lady Capulet.

#### 2

**Characterization.** Lady Capulet seems scatterbrained, not knowing whether to include Nurse in conversation. That the nurse is aware of what is going on is important to the story.

3

Nurse starts to wager fourteen of her teeth that she knows Juliet's precise age but remembers that she has only four teeth.

4

**Exposition.** Because a fortnight is two weeks, conversation establishes Juliet's age and birthday, and the time of year, mid-July.

5

Apparently Capulets hired her as a wet nurse for Juliet after Nurse's daughter Susan died.

6

The day Nurse began weaning Juliet, earthquake shook the dovehouse so much that the Nurse had to get away from it. Nurse rambles from topic to topic, letting audience know about the past.

7

**Characterization.** Nurse is proud of her memory and fond of Juliet, who is like a daughter to her.

8

Because she asks Nurse to stop talking, audience may assume Lady Capulet has heard Nurse's story many times.

**Lady Capulet.** She's not fourteen.

3 Nurse.

I'll lay fourteen of my teeth—

And yet, to my teen° be it spoken, I have but four—  
She is not fourteen. How long is it now  
To Lammastide?°

15

4 Lady Capulet.

A fortnight and odd days.

Nurse. Even or odd, of all days in the year,

Come Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.

Susan and she—God rest all Christian souls!—

Were of an age. Well, Susan is with God.

She was too good for me.—But, as I said,

On Lammas Eve at night shall she be fourteen.

That shall she, marry, I remember it well.

'Tis since the earthquake now eleven years,°

And she was weaned—I never shall forget it—

Of all the days of the year, upon that day.

For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,

Sitting in the sun under the dovehouse wall;

My lord and you were then at Mantua.—

Nay, I do bear a brain.°—But, as I said,

When it did taste the wormwood on the nipple

Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool,

To see it tetchy,° and fall out with the dug!

6 Shake, quoth the dovehouse. 'Twas no need, I trow,°

To bid me trudge.

And since that time it is eleven years;

For then she could stand high-lone°—nay, by the rood,°

She could have run and waddled all about,

For even the day before, she broke her brow,

And then my husband—God be with his soul!

A° was a merry man—took up the child.

"Yea," quoth he, "dost thou fall upon thy face?"

Thou wilt fall backward when thou hast more wit,

Wilt thou not, Jule?" And, by my holidame,°

The pretty wretch left crying, and said "Aye."

To see now how a jest shall come about!

7 I warrant an I should live a thousand years,

I never should forget it. "Wilt thou not, Jule?" quoth he,

And, pretty fool, it stunted,° and said "Aye."

8 Lady Capulet. Enough of this. I pray thee hold thy peace.

20

25

30

35

40

45

50

14. **teen**: sorrow. 16. **Lammastide**: a church festival celebrated August 1. 24. **'Tis . . . years**: An earthquake occurred in England in 1580. 30. **I . . . brain**: I have a head (memory). 33. **tetchy**: peevish. 34. **trow**: guess. 37. **high-lone**: unaided. **rood**: cross, crucifix. 41. **A**: he. 44. **holidame**: holy relic. 49. **stunted**: stopped.



- 9 **Nurse.** Yes, madam, yet I cannot choose but laugh  
To think it should leave crying, and say "Aye."  
And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow  
A bump as big as a young cockerel's stone,  
A perilous<sup>o</sup> knock, and it cried bitterly.  
"Yea," quoth my husband, "fall'st upon thy face?  
Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest to age,  
Wilt thou not, Jule?" It stinted, and said "Aye."
- 10 **Juliet.** And stint thou too, I pray thee, Nurse, say I.  
**Nurse.** Peace, I have done. God mark<sup>o</sup> thee to His grace!  
Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nursed.  
'An I might live to see thee married once,  
I have my wish.
- Lady Capulet.** Marry,<sup>o</sup> that "marry" is the very theme  
I came to talk of. Tell me, daughter Juliet,  
How stands your disposition to be married?
- 11 **Juliet.** It is an honor that I dream not of. *what does - mean?*  
**Nurse.** An honor! Were not I thine only nurse,  
I would say thou hadst sucked wisdom from thy teat.
- Lady Capulet.** Well, think of marriage now. Younger than you  
Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,  
Are made already mothers. By my count,  
12 I was your mother much upon these years<sup>o</sup>  
That you are now a maid. Thus then in brief—  
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.
- 13 **Nurse.** A man, young lady! Lady, such a man  
As all the world—Why, he's a man of wax.<sup>o</sup>
- Lady Capulet.** Verona's summer hath not such a flower.  
**Nurse.** Nay, he's a flower, in faith, a very flower.  
**Lady Capulet.** What say you? Can you love the gentleman?  
This night you shall behold him at our feast.  
Read o'er the volume<sup>o</sup> of young Paris' face,  
And find delight writ there with beauty's pen.  
Examine every married lineament,<sup>o</sup>  
And see how one another lends content,  
And what obscured in this fair volume lies  
Find written in the margent<sup>o</sup> of his eyes.
- 14 This precious book of love, this unbound lover,  
To beautify him, only lacks a cover.
- 15 The fish lives in the sea, and 'tis much pride

55. **perilous:** severe. 60. **mark:** select, choose. 64. **Marry:** indeed. 73. **much . . . years:** at much the same age. 77. **man of wax:** perfect, like a wax model. 82–93. **volume . . . story:** In these lines, Shakespeare compares Paris to a book. 84. **married lineament:** perfectly united part. 87. **margent:** margin.

9

Even Lady Capulet cannot stop the Nurse's hearty enjoyment of her own storytelling; Nurse tells her story again using many of the same words.

10

A witty wordplay by Juliet. She too has heard enough of Nurse's tales of her childhood. (Nurse had earlier used *stinted* to mean "stopped").

11

Use to answer study question 6b, p. 506.

12

If Lady Capulet were fourteen when she bore Juliet, she would now be twenty-eight, appreciably younger than her husband.

13

**Metaphor.** Paris is compared to a wax model, a flower, and a book. The book metaphor is elaborately followed as Lady Capulet argues on behalf of Paris.

14

Books were sold unbound; buyer could supply whatever cover he or she wished.

15

**Metaphor.** Paris ("the fish") has not been caught (married), and marrying him would be a great achievement. The metaphor "many fish in the sea" is still used to refer to potential mates.

16

Paris' outer qualities reflect his inner qualities.

17

Lady Capulet amplifies her **metaphor** of book cover: many think better of a good book if it has a beautiful cover (Juliet as his wife).

18

Nurse cannot refrain from commenting realistically on one frequent consequence of marriage—pregnancy.

19

**Diction.** Shakespeare may have invented the word *endart*. He uses it nowhere else. Probable meaning is "to look within."

20

Household bustles with preparations for the coming party, at which Juliet is destined to meet Romeo.

## Scene 4

1

Romeo and his friends wear masks and are presumably unidentifiable—though audience has no difficulty in knowing who is who.

2

Benvolio imagines a messenger costumed as a blindfolded Cupid carrying bow and threatening ladies with his arrows.

3

**Pun.** Benvolio plays on three meanings of *measure*: to decide what a person is like; to draw the proportions of something; to dance.

16

For fair without the fair within to hide.

17

That book in many's eyes doth share the glory  
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.  
So shall you share all that he doth possess,  
By having him making yourself no less.

18

**Nurse.** No less! Nay, bigger. Women grow by men.

Speak briefly. Can you like of Paris' love?

**Juliet.** I'll look to like, if looking liking move.<sup>9</sup>

19

But no more deep will I endart mine eye  
Than your consent<sup>9</sup> gives strength to make it fly.

[Enter a Servingman.]

20

**Servant.** Madam, the guests are come, supper served up, you called, my young lady asked for, the nurse cursed in the pantry, and everything in extremity.<sup>9</sup> I must hence to wait. I beseech you, follow straight.<sup>9</sup>

**Lady Capulet.** We follow thee.

Juliet, the County stays.<sup>9</sup>

**Nurse.** Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

[Exit Servingman.]

[Exeunt.]

## Scene 4

1 [A street. Enter Romeo, Mercutio, Benvolio, with five or six other Maskers, and Torchbearers on their way to Capulet's house.]

2 **Romeo.** What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?<sup>9</sup>

Or shall we on without apology?

**Benvolio.** The date is out of such prolixity<sup>9</sup>

We'll have no Cupid hoodwinked<sup>9</sup> with a scarf,

Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,<sup>9</sup>

Scaring the ladies like a crow-keeper;<sup>9</sup>

Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke

After the prompter, for our entrance.

3

But let them measure us by what they will,

We'll measure them a measure,<sup>9</sup> and be gone.

**Romeo.** Give me a torch. I am not for this ambling.<sup>9</sup>

Being but heavy,<sup>9</sup> I will bear the light.

**Mercutio.** Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you dance.

98. **move:** arouse. 100. **consent:** approval. 102. **extremity:** confusion. 103. **straight:** right away, at once. 105. **stays:** waits for you.

1. **excuse:** In Elizabethan times, it was customary for uninvited maskers to send a messenger with a speech to announce their coming. 3. **prolixity:** an elaborate device. Benvolio says that the custom of sending a messenger in costume is out of date. 4. **hoodwinked:** blindfolded. 5. **bow of lath:** short curved bow. 6. **crow-keeper:** scarecrow. 10. **measure:** dance. 11. **ambling:** mincing. 12. **heavy:** sad.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide* 65

- 4 **Romeo.** Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes  
With nimble soles. I have a soul of lead  
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move. 15
- 5 **Mercutio.** You are a lover. Borrow Cupid's wings,  
And soar with them above a common bound.<sup>o</sup>
- Romeo.** I am too sore empiercèd with his shaft<sup>o</sup>  
To soar with his light feathers, and so bound,  
I cannot bound a pitch<sup>o</sup> above dull woe. 20  
Under love's heavy burden do I sink.
- Mercutio.** And to sink in it, should you burden love,  
Too great oppression for a tender thing.
- Romeo.** Is love a tender thing? It is too rough, 25  
Too rude, too boisterous, and it pricks like thorn.
- 6 **Mercutio.** If love be rough with you, be rough with love.  
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.  
Give me a case to put my visage<sup>o</sup> in.  
A visor for a visor!<sup>o</sup> What care I 30  
What curious eye doth quote<sup>o</sup> deformities?  
Here are the beetle<sup>o</sup> brows shall blush for me.
- Benvolio.** Come, knock and enter, and no sooner in  
But every man betake him to his legs.<sup>o</sup>
- Romeo.** A torch for me. Let wantons light of heart 35  
Tickle the senseless rushes<sup>o</sup> with their heels,  
For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase.<sup>o</sup>  
I'll be a candleholder,<sup>o</sup> and look on.
- 7 The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.<sup>o</sup>
- Mercutio.** Tut, dun's the mouse, the constable's own word. 40
- 8 If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire<sup>o</sup>  
Of this sir-reverence love wherein thou stick'st
- 9 Up to the ears. Come, we burn daylight,<sup>o</sup> ho.
- Romeo.** Nay, that's not so.
- Mercutio.** I mean, sir, in delay 45  
We waste our lights in vain, like lamps by day.  
Take our good meaning, for our judgment sits  
Five times in that ere once in our five wits.<sup>o</sup>
- 10 **Romeo.** And we mean well in going to this mask,  
But 'tis no wit to go.

18. **bound:** leap. 19. **empiercèd** (pronounced as 3 syllables): pierced, wounded. **shaft:** arrow. 21. **bound a pitch:** leap in flight. 29. **visage:** face. Mercutio covers his face with a mask. 30. **visor for a visor:** mask for an ugly face. 31. **quote:** note. 32. **beetle:** overhanging. 34. **betake him to his legs:** begin to dance. 36. **rushes:** Floors were covered with rushes, grasslike plants. 37. **grandsire phrase:** old proverb. 38. **candleholder:** onlooker. 39. **The game . . . done:** I am too tired for the game no matter how fair it is. 40–41. **dun's . . . mire:** a reference to a game, "dun is in the mire," in which a heavy log (dun) was pulled through the mud. 43. **burn daylight:** waste time. 46–47. **judgment . . . wits:** People judge us five times for our reputation before they judge us for our intellect.

4  
**Pun.** Romeo puns on *sole* and *soul* (l. 15). Lines 17–24 contain multiple puns on *sore-soar*, *bound*, *pitch*, *burden*, and *sink*.

5  
**Characterization.** In this brief speech, Mercutio reveals quick wit. His name suggests mercury, or quicksilver.

6  
**Foil.** Mercutio's character provides a contrast to Romeo, who resists being cheered up.

7  
Romeo uses *done* to mean "tired," "hopelessly in love," "totally defeated" ("done for"), and "finished."

8  
Mercutio's play on words (*done*, *dun*) provides an image of the way Romeo's lovesickness is draining his spirits.

9  
**What is Mercutio's purpose in this witty and imaginative conversation?** To cheer Romeo; perhaps to make him receptive to a new love.

10  
**Foreshadowing.** Romeo realizes it is not wise to go to this party, a very prescient evaluation supported by the subsequent events.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The formal masque was an ornate and expensive dramatic entertainment, often including music, dances, and disguises. It frequently concluded with a dance involving the spectators. The masque is believed to be of Italian origin.

The informal masque that Romeo and his friends are about to perform in this production of the play, involving a little music and dancing, is clearly simpler than the formal masques performed for the English court in the 1600s.



A scene from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's 1982 production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

**Mercutio.** Why, may one ask?

**Romeo.** I dreamed a dream tonight.

**Mercutio.** And so did I.

**Romeo.** Well, what was yours?

**Mercutio.** That dreamers often lie.

**Romeo.** In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

**Mercutio.** Oh then, I see Queen Mab<sup>53</sup> hath been with you.

She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes

In shape no bigger than an agate stone<sup>55</sup>

On the forefinger of an alderman,

**12** Drawn with a team of little atomies<sup>57</sup>

ⓐthwart men's noses as they lie asleep—

**13** Her wagon spokes made of long spinners' legs;

The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers;

Her traces,<sup>59</sup> of the smallest spider's web;

Her collars, of the moonshine's watery beams;

Her whip, of cricket's bone; the lash, of film;<sup>60</sup>

Her wagoner,<sup>61</sup> a small gray-coated gnat

Not half so big as a round little worm

53. **Queen Mab**: the fairy queen. 55. **agate** (ăg'it) **stone**: large seal ring. 57. **atomies**: tiny creatures. 59. **spinners**: spiders. 61. **traces**: harness. 63. **film**: spider's thread. 64. **wagoner**: coachman.

**11**

The **monologue** that follows contains many famous images and incorporates references to folklore of the time.

**12**

Atomies would be about the size of dust motes in a sunbeam.

**13**

**Imagery.** Fanciful description of Mab's marvelous, tiny chariot and helpers is followed by discussion of what people dream when Mab visits them.

- Pricked from the lazy finger of a maid.<sup>65</sup>  
 14 Her chariot is an empty hazelnut,  
 Made by the joiner<sup>66</sup> squirrel or old grub,  
 Time out o' mind the fairies' coachmakers.  
 15 And in this state<sup>67</sup> she gallops night by night  
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love;  
 O'er courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies straight;  
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees;  
 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream,  
 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues  
 Because their breaths with sweetmeats<sup>68</sup> tainted are.  
 16 Sometimes she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,  
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit.<sup>69</sup>  
 And sometime comes she with a tithe pig's<sup>70</sup> tail  
 Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,  
 Then dreams he of another benefice.<sup>71</sup>  
 Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,  
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,  
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes,<sup>72</sup> Spanish blades,  
 Of healths<sup>73</sup> five fathom deep; and then anon  
 Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,  
 And being thus frightened swears a prayer or two,  
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab  
 17 That plaits the manes of horses in the night,  
 And bakes the elflocks<sup>74</sup> in foul slutish hairs,  
 Which once untangled much misfortune bodes.  
 This is the hag,<sup>75</sup> when maids lie on their backs.  
 That presses them and learns them first to bear,  
 18 Making them women of good carriage.  
 This is she——  
 19 **Romeo.** Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace!  
 Thou talk'st of nothing.  
 20 **Mercutio.** True, I talk of dreams,  
 Which are the children of an idle brain,  
 Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,<sup>76</sup>  
 Which is as thin of substance as the air  
 And more inconstant than the wind, who woos  
 100 Even now the frozen bosom of the North,

people dream b/c of  
 action of Mab.  
 He's playing fun at people, and  
 their more primitive side.

14  
 Mercutio justifies his "quicksilver" name in his "Queen Mab" speech.

15  
 "Mab," name of the fairy queen, is of Celtic origin. Like figures in the mythologies and folklore of many cultures, she has the power to cause people to dream.

16  
**Satire.** Mercutio uses Queen Mab and dreams she supposedly brings to people as vehicle to satirize a range of people and professions. In dreams, according to Mercutio, people's baser motives are likely to surface. He is attempting to amuse Romeo.

17  
 Queen Mab is not always kind. She may be mischievous or hurtful.

18  
 Mercutio is witty, imaginative, and talkative. His point is that dreams are not to be taken too seriously.

19  
 In desperation, Romeo finally interrupts Mercutio.

20  
 Barely deflected by Romeo's interruption, Mercutio continues to talk.

65–66. **worm** . . . **maid**: In Shakespeare's time, it was a popular superstition that lazy maids grew worms in their fingers.  
 68. **joiner**: carpenter. 70. **state**: grand style. 76. **sweetmeats**: sweets; candy, cakes. 78. **suit**: a petition for special favor. 79. **tithe** (tith) **pig**: the parson was often paid in goods, such as a pig, instead of money. 81. **benefice**: church appointment, source of income. 84. **ambuscadoes**: ambushes. 85. **healths**: toasts. 90. **elflocks**: Mischievous fairies were supposed to make knots in horses' manes and to tangle human hair. 92. **hag**: nightmare. 98. **fantasy**: fancy.

21

Benvolio finally brings Mercutio back to reality by introducing practical concerns.

22

**Foreshadowing** "Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars" reminds audience that Romeo is fated to be star-crossed lover. Shakespeare brings scene of high comedy to somber close.

23

Romeo prays for God to be his pilot.

## Scene 5

1

Short transitional scene between Capulet servants helps establish party atmosphere.

2

True-to-life complaining and bustling of servants. First Servant wants to be sure he gets a piece of the leftover dessert.

3

**What kind of host is Capulet?** Hospitable and jovial. He welcomes the maskers and teases ladies to dance with them.

*Does he know the maskers are Mercutio's? "What would he do if he did?"*

And, being angered, puffs away from thence,  
Turning his face to the dew-dropping South.

**Benvolio.** This wind you talk of blows us from ourselves.  
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

**Romeo.** I fear, too early. For my mind misgives°  
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,  
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date°  
With this night's revels, and expire the term  
Of a despisèd life° closed in my breast  
By some vile forfeit of untimely death.  
But He that hath the steerage of my course  
Direct my sail! On, lusty gentlemen.

**Benvolio.** Strike, drum.

[*Exeunt.*]

## Scene 5

[*A hall in Capulet's house. Musicians waiting. Enter Servingmen, with napkins.*]

**1 First Servant.** Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? He shift a trencher!° He scrape a trencher!

**Second Servant.** When good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands, and they unwashed too, 'tis a foul thing.

**2 First Servant.** Away with the joint stools,° remove the court cupboard,° look to the plate.°  
Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane.° And, as thou lovest me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone and Nell. Antony, and Potpan!

**Second Servant.** Aye, boy, ready.

**First Servant.** You are looked for and called for, asked for and sought for, in the great chamber.°

**Third Servant.** We cannot be here and there too. Cheerly, boys. Be brisk a while, and the longer liver take all.°

[*They retire behind.*]

[*Enter Capulet, with Juliet and others of his house, meeting the Guests and Maskers.*]

**3 Capulet.** Welcome, gentlemen! Ladies that have their toes  
Unplagued with corns will have a bout with you.  
Ah ha, my mistresses! Which of you all  
Will now deny to dance? She that makes dainty,°  
She, I'll swear, hath corns—am I come near ye now?°

106. **misgives:** fears. 108. **date:** time, period. 109–110. **expire . . . life:** cause the lease of my life to come to an end.  
1. **trencher:** wooden platter. 5. **joint stools:** stools made by a joiner (carpenter). **cupboard:** sideboard. **plate:** silver plate. 6. **marchpane:** marzipan, a mixture made of almond paste. 9–10. **great chamber:** used for dining and social occasions. 12. **longer liver take all:** The last survivor takes all. 16. **makes dainty:** pretends to be shy. 17. **come near ye now:** touching a tender spot.



- Welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day  
That I have worn a visor,<sup>19</sup> and could tell  
A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear  
Such as would please. 'Tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone. 20
- 4 You are welcome, gentlemen! Come, musicians, play.  
A hall, a hall!<sup>20</sup> Give room! And foot it, girls. [*Music plays, and they dance.*]  
More light, you knaves, and turn the tables up,  
And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot. 25  
Ah, sirrah, this unlooked-for sport<sup>20</sup> comes well.  
Nay, sit, nay, sit, good Cousin Capulet,  
For you and I are past our dancing days.  
How long is 't now since last yourself and I  
Were in a mask?
- 5 **Second Capulet.** By 'r Lady, thirty years. 30  
**Capulet.** What, man! 'Tis not so much, 'tis not so much.  
'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,  
Come Pentecost<sup>20</sup> as quickly as it will,  
6 Some five and twenty years, and then we masked. 35  
**Second Capulet.** 'Tis more, 'tis more. His son is elder, sir,  
His son is thirty.  
**Capulet.** Will you tell me that?  
His son was but a ward<sup>20</sup> two years ago.
- [*Romeo, masked and unrecognized, sees Juliet and instantly falls in love with her.*]
- 7 **Romeo.** [*To a Servingman*] What lady's that which doth enrich the hand  
Of yonder knight? *\* sees Juliet. Falls in love at first sight* 40  
**Servant.** I know not, sir.
- 8 **Romeo.** Oh, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!  
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night  
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear—  
Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!<sup>20</sup>
- 9 So shows a snowy dove trooping with crows 45  
As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.  
The measure<sup>20</sup> done, I'll watch her place of stand,  
10 And, touching hers, make blessed my rude hand.  
Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!  
11 For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night. 50
- Tybalt.** This, by his voice, should be a Montague.  
Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave

19. **worn a visor:** worn a mask—that is, has been a dancer. 23. **A hall, a hall:** that is, clear the hall for dancing. 26. **unlooked-for sport:** Capulet had not expected the maskers. 33. **Pentecost:** the seventh Sunday after Easter. 37. **ward:** a minor in the charge of a guardian. 44. **dear:** precious. 47. **measure:** dance.

4 Capulet not only accepts gate-crashers but also welcomes them. Because they wear masks, he does not recognize that some guests are Montagues.

5 How long has it been since Lord Capulet attended parties as a masker? By his cousin's count, thirty years. Lord Capulet is sure it has been less.

6 As the two men reminisce about their wild youth, audience can discern that Capulet is in his fifties, much older than Lady Capulet, who is only twenty-eight.

7 Seeing Juliet, Romeo forgets Rosaline.

8 **Figurative language.** Juliet is associated with images of brightness—torches, a jewel—set against a dark background.

9 Romeo compares Juliet to dove, **symbol** of innocence and purity. She makes the other girls look like crows.

10 Romeo expresses attitude toward Juliet in religious terms: by touching her, he will "make blessed" his hand.

11 Benvolio's prediction that new love will replace the old love has come to pass. Romeo is instantly and hopelessly in love; Rosaline is completely forgotten.

12

Placement of words of hatred right after Romeo's worshipping words of love accentuates their effect.

13

**Epithet.** Tybalt reveals ill will when he calls Romeo "our foe," "villain," and later "that villain Romeo" (l. 62), and "such a villain" (l. 72).

14

Capulet reveals tolerance and good will in description of Romeo: "Young Romeo," "gentleman" (l. 63), and "well-governed youth" (l. 65).

15

Capulet has been young and a masker himself. He wants to keep party pleasant.

16

**How does Capulet react to this insistent belligerence?** Angri-ly belittles Tybalt and reminds him who is master of the house.

17

Modern equivalent for "Go to" is the impatient "Come, come!"

18

**Characterization.** Tybalt is quarrelsome by nature. Ironically, since Tybalt's aggressiveness will get him killed, this remark is truer than Capulet knows.

19

Capulet reassures others as he forces Tybalt to be quiet.

Come hither, covered with an antic face,<sup>53</sup>

To flee<sup>54</sup> and scorn at our solemnity?<sup>55</sup>

12 Now, by the stock and honor of my kin,  
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

55

**Capulet.** Why, how now, kinsman! Wherefore storm you so?

13 **Tybalt.** Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe,  
A villain, that is hither come in spite  
To scorn at our solemnity this night.

60

14 **Capulet.** Young Romeo, is it?

**Tybalt.** 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

**Capulet.** Content thee, gentle Coz, let him alone,

He bears him like a portly<sup>63</sup> gentleman,  
And, to say truth, Verona brags of him  
To be a virtuous and well-governed youth.

65

15 I would not for the wealth of all this town  
Here in my house do him disparagement.<sup>67</sup>  
Therefore be patient, take no note of him.  
It is my will, the which if thou respect,  
Show a fair presence and put off these frowns,  
An ill-beseeming semblance<sup>71</sup> for a feast.

70

**Tybalt.** It fits when such a villain is a guest.

I'll not endure him.

16 **Capulet.** [*Losing his temper*] He shall be endured.

What, goodman boy<sup>74</sup> I say he shall. Go to,<sup>75</sup>

Am I the master here, or you? Go to.

75

You'll not endure him! God shall mend my soul,

You'll make a mutiny among my guests!

You will set cock-a-hoop!<sup>78</sup> You'll be the man!

**Tybalt.** Why Uncle, 'tis a shame.

17 **Capulet.** Go to, go to,

You are a saucy boy. Is't so, indeed?

80

18 This trick<sup>81</sup> may chance to scathe<sup>82</sup> you, I know what.

19 You must contrary me! Marry, 'tis time.

Well said, my hearts! You are a princox,<sup>83</sup> go.

Be quiet, or—More light, more light! For shame!

85

I'll make you quiet. What, cheerly, my hearts!

**Tybalt.** Patience perforce<sup>86</sup> with willful choler<sup>86</sup> meeting

Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.

53. **antic face**: grotesque mask. 54. **flee**: sneer. **solemnity**: celebration. 63. **portly**: dignified. 67. **disparagement** (dis-pär' ij-mənt): disrespect, insult. 71. **semblance**: appearance. 74. **goodman boy**: an insulting phrase. Goodman is a man under the rank of gentleman. **Go to**: an exclamation showing impatience. 78. **You . . . cock-a-hoop**: You want to start fighting. 81. **trick**: habit (of quarreling). **scathe**: injure. 83. **princox**: conceited boy. 86. **perforce**: forced (on me). **choler** (köl' ər): anger.

- 20 I will withdraw. But this intrusion shall,  
Now seeming sweet, convert to bitterest gall.
- 21 **Romeo.** [*To Juliet*] If° I profane with my unworhiest hand  
This holy shrine, the gentle fine° is this,  
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand  
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.
- 22 **Juliet.** Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,  
Which mannerly devotion° shows in this;  
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,  
And palm to palm is holy palmers° kiss.
- 23 **Romeo.** Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?
- Juliet.** Aye, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.
- Romeo.** Oh then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do.  
They pray. Grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.
- Juliet.** Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

[*Exit.*]

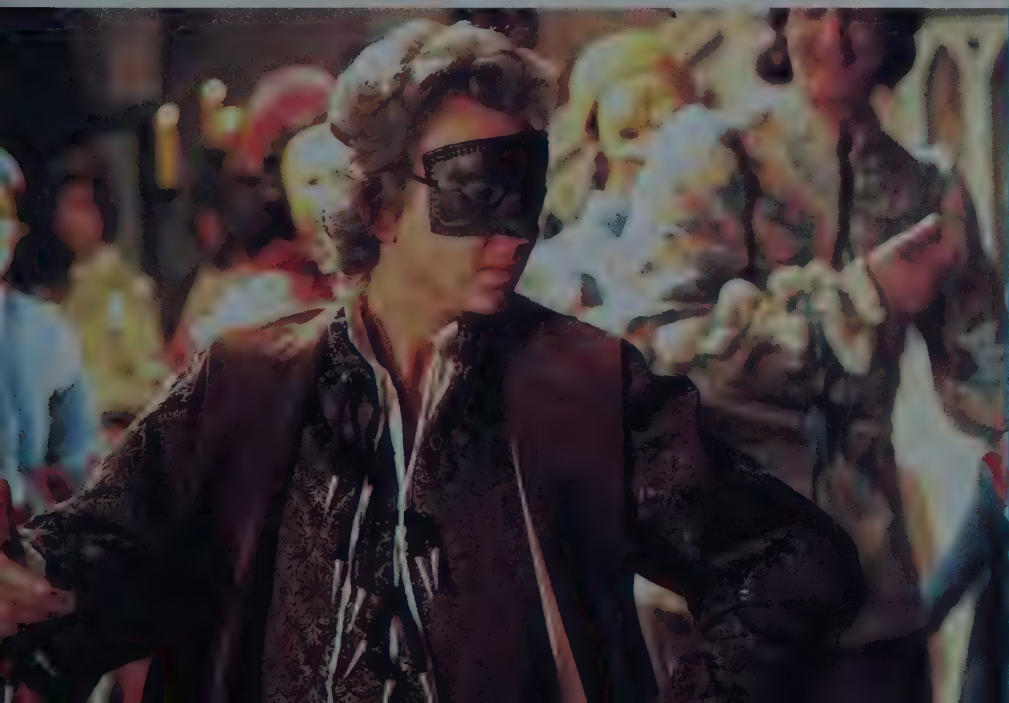
90

95

100

90–103. **If . . . take:** These fourteen lines are a Shakespearean sonnet. The dialogue is based on the metaphor that Romeo is a pilgrim and Juliet a saint. 91. **fine:** punishment. 95. **devotion:** the pilgrim's vow. 97. **palmer:** a pilgrim who carried a palm leaf to show that he or she had been to the Holy Land.

A scene from the 1985 BBC-TV production of *Romeo and Juliet*.



20

**Conflict.** Tybalt storms away, vowing revenge on Romeo, who is blissfully unaware of his present and future peril.

21

Both Romeo's approach and Juliet's response express **theme** of religious devotion. Lines form a **sonnet**.

22

Juliet wittily reminds Romeo that his hand is not rough and that to a palmer, a kiss is not made with lips. Pun on *palm*.

23

Undeterred, Romeo tries another argument. Juliet concedes that she will accept a kiss on those terms.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

At this dance, Tybalt's virulent hatred is contrasted with the romantic love of Romeo and Juliet. Ask the students to write brief compositions in which they discuss the dramatic effect of contrasting these emotions.



24

"My prayer's effect I take": take what I prayed for. His "sin" is taken away by his touching her holy lips.

25

As Act One draws to close, conflict between the lovers' obligations to their families and their love for each other is established. Romeo knows that Juliet is a Capulet.

26

Pun. Romeo puns on *chinks* with *dear account* and *debt*.

27

Why does Juliet ask about the other young men? Responses will vary. Probably to hide her feelings for Romeo.

28

Conventions. Only first sentence is spoken to Nurse. Second sentence is an aside. Ironic that Juliet's words reflect future.

24 **Romeo.** Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.  
Thus from my lips by thine my sin is purged.

[Kissing her.]

**Juliet.** Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

105

**Romeo.** Sin from my lips? Oh, trespass sweetly urged!<sup>o</sup>  
Give me my sin again.

**Juliet.** You kiss by the book.<sup>o</sup>

**Nurse.** Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

**Romeo.** What is her mother?

**Nurse.** Marry, bachelor,  
Her mother is the lady of the house,  
And a good lady, and a wise and virtuous.  
I nursed her daughter, that you talked withal.<sup>o</sup>  
I tell you, he that can lay hold of her  
Shall have the chinks.<sup>o</sup>

110

25 **Romeo.** Is she a Capulet?

26 Oh, dear account! My life is my foe's debt.<sup>o</sup>

115

**Benvolio.** Away, be gone. The sport is at the best.

**Romeo.** Aye, so I fear. The more is my unrest.

**Capulet.** Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone,  
We have a trifling foolish banquet toward.<sup>o</sup>  
Is it e'en so? Why then, I thank you all,  
I thank you, honest gentlemen. Good night.  
More torches here! Come on, then, let's to bed.  
Ah, sirrah, by my fay,<sup>o</sup> it waxes<sup>o</sup> late.  
I'll to my rest.

120

[Exeunt all but Juliet and Nurse. At first Juliet hides her feelings for Romeo.]

27 **Juliet.** Come hither, Nurse. What is yond gentleman?

125

**Nurse.** The son and heir of old Tiberio.

**Juliet.** What's he that now is going out of door?

**Nurse.** Marry, that, I think, be young Petruchio.

**Juliet.** What's he that follows there, that would not dance?

**Nurse.** I know not. -

130

28 **Juliet.** Go ask his name. If he be married,

My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

106. urged: argued. 107. by the book: according to the book; that is, you are merely being gallant. 112. withal: with. 114. chinks: cash. 115. is my foe's debt: belongs to my enemy. 119. toward: in preparation. 123. fay: faith. waxes: grows.

Nurse. His name is Romeo, and a Montague.  
The only son of your great enemy.

29 Juliet. My only love sprung from my only hate!  
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!  
Prodigious<sup>o</sup> birth of love it is to me,  
That I must love a loathed enemy.

Nurse. What's this? What's this?

Juliet. A rhyme I learned even now  
Of one I danced withal. [*One calls within, "Juliet."*]

Nurse. Anon, anon!

30 Come, let's away, the strangers all are gone.

137. **Prodigious:** monstrous, unnatural.

## Reading Check

1. How does Sampson begin the quarrel with Montague's servants?
2. What is Benvolio's relationship to Romeo?
3. According to Romeo, what vow has Rosaline taken?
4. How old is Juliet?
5. How do Benvolio and Romeo learn about Capulet's feast?
6. Where does Juliet see Paris for the first time?
7. How are Juliet and Tybalt related?
8. According to Mercutio, what creature visits people at night and influences their dreams?
9. Why does Tybalt send for his sword during the feast?
10. How do Romeo and Juliet learn each other's identity?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

1. In fourteen lines the Prologue gives the setting and background of the play and prepares the audience for what is to come.

a. Which words in the Prologue point to the influence of fate in the deaths of Romeo and Juliet? (b) What effect will their deaths have on their parents' quarrel? ✓

2a. Why do you think Shakespeare never explains how the quarrel between the Montagues and the Capulets began? (b) What does the Prince think has caused "three civil brawls"? c. How does he intend to punish any future outbreaks of violence?

3a. Describe Romeo's mood when he first enters. b. What has caused him to feel as he does?

4. Paris wishes to marry Juliet. a. Why is Capulet reluctant to accept the Count's offer? b. What do you learn about Capulet's feelings for his daughter?

5a. For what reason does Benvolio urge Romeo to attend Capulet's feast? b. Why does Romeo want to go?

135

29

Juliet discovers that she has fallen in love with an enemy of her house. Juliet rhymes the paradoxes of loving a Montague, and then cleverly evades Nurse's question.

30

The events of this act have happened in less than a day. Major conflict has been established.

140

[*Exeunt.*]

## READING CHECK

1. Bites thumb at them, an insult (p. 484).
2. Cousin (p. 488).
3. Not to marry (p. 490).
4. Not yet fourteen (p. 491).
5. Illiterate servant asks them to read invitation (p. 492).
6. At the feast (p. 495).
7. Cousins (p. 485).
8. Queen Mab (p. 498).
9. Wants to fight Romeo (p. 501).
10. From Nurse (pp. 504–505).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1a. "Star-crossed," "misadventured," "death-marked." (1b) Will end quarrel.

2a. Responses will vary. Emphasizes unreasonable nature of feud. 2b. "An airy word." 2c. By executing peace violators.

3a. Sad, frustrated, confused. 3b. Rosaline, whom he loves, refuses to love him.

4a. He thinks Juliet too young. 4b. She is his only living child. He loves and respects her.

5a. To see others prettier than Rosaline. 5b. To see Rosaline, to admire her beauty.

6a. Responses will vary. Juliet is obedient, respectful. 6b. At first, she says "It is an honor that I dream not of." 6c. Juliet's mother wants her to marry Paris.

7a. Responses will vary. She is talkative, frank, earthy, humorous, sentimental, very fond of Juliet. 7b. Tells funny story about Juliet as baby, talks a lot.

8a. Tells of Queen Mab's influence on dreams. 8b. Probably not. 8c. Does not want Romeo to take dreams seriously.

9. Tybalt wants rapier as soon as he hears Romeo's voice. In Scene 1, he insists on fighting. Tybalt is unreasonable, hot-tempered; hates Montagues.

10. In Scene 1, Capulet assumes Montague means to attack him. Later, Romeo is Capulet's guest. Also, Prince's commands induce him to keep peace.

11. Romeo wants to show adoration, courtesy, eagerness to love. Juliet wants to praise his manners, be modest, show she likes him.

12a. Stated in Prologue, shown in Scene 1 by fight, referred to in Scene 2, shown by Romeo's apprehension at end of Scene 4, and by Tybalt's wish to kill, alluded to by Juliet near end of Scene 5: "My only love sprung from . . .!" 12b. Answers will vary. Tybalt means to kill Romeo.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

### Dramatic Structure: The Foil

1. Frank, humorous Nurse is foil for dignified Lady Capulet.

2. Mercutio's cheerful advice and fanciful depiction of Mab contrast strongly with Romeo's mournful, unrequited love.

3. Tybalt's fiery hatred makes meeting of Romeo and Juliet seem more beautiful and romantic but increases audience's apprehension.

6a. How would you characterize Juliet's behavior toward her mother? b. What is Juliet's feeling about marriage? c. Do you think her answer (Scene 3, lines 98–100) pleases her mother?

7a. What do you learn about the Nurse's character in Scene 3? b. How does she provide humor in the scene?

8a. How does Mercutio attempt to cheer Romeo in Scene 4? b. Does he really believe in Queen Mab? c. What is his purpose in describing Queen Mab to Romeo?

9. Reread Tybalt's lines in Scene 1. How is his behavior at Capulet's feast consistent with his behavior in the earlier scene?

10. In Scene 1, Capulet calls for a sword when he sees his enemy Montague. Yet when Tybalt wishes to attack Romeo, Capulet restrains him. Why?

11. The first fourteen lines that Romeo and Juliet speak to each other form a sonnet (see page 503) in which Romeo sees himself as a pilgrim and Juliet as the saint he worships. What does the language show about their feelings for each other?

12a. How does Shakespeare keep you aware of the bitter hatred between the Montagues and the Capulets throughout Act One? b. Which characters do you think will come into conflict in later scenes?

## Literary Elements

### Dramatic Structure: The Foil

To examine how a play has been put together, we analyze its **structure**. The most important structural device in *Romeo and Juliet* is **juxtaposition for contrast**. Shakespeare repeatedly places two people or words or actions side by side in order to heighten the differences between them.

A character who serves as a contrast for another character is called a **foil**. Originally, "foil" meant a thin sheet of metal (remember aluminum foil) that was placed under a jewel to make it appear brighter.

In the first scene of the play, Benvolio is a foil for Tybalt. Benvolio attempts to keep the peace but Tybalt insists on fighting. Each character is intensified by the other's presence.

- 1 In Scene 3, how does the Nurse serve as a foil for Lady Capulet?
- 2 In Scene 4, how does Mercutio serve as a foil for Romeo? In Scene 5, Tybalt's discovery of Romeo at the Capulet party almost leads to conflict. This episode is followed by the meeting of Romeo and Juliet.
- 3 Tell how these sequences make for dramatic contrast.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to explain how the action of the opening act grows out of the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets. Have them identify various possible conflicts.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Students might enjoy holding a Shakespeare Festival. Some students might research the life of Shakespeare or become familiar with the basic plots and characters of his major works for oral and written reports. Other students could bring

pictures of actors in Shakespearean dress or create their own artwork. You might have them create pictures of Shakespeare himself. Students might also perform brief scenes from different Shakespearean plays.

### Personification

**Personification** is a figure of speech in which an animal, object, or idea is treated as if it were human. Many characters in *Romeo and Juliet* speak of love (an idea) as a person.

Alas that love, whose view is muffled still,

Should without eyes see pathways to his will!

Romeo in this speech has in mind the old saying "Love is blind," which really means that those who are in love do not see the faults of those they love. Romeo personifies love, saying it is like a person who can see how to get what he wants even though he is blindfolded.

**1** Explain what is being personified in each of these quotations from Act One:

**a** In the instant came  
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepared,  
Which as he breathed defiance to my ears,  
He swung about his head and cut the winds,  
Who, nothing hurt withal, hissed him in scorn.  
(1, 94–98)

**b** Madam, an hour before the worshiped sun  
Peered forth the golden window of the east,  
A troubled mind drove me to walk abroad. . .  
(1, 104–106)

**c** Such comfort as do lusty young men feel  
When well-appareled April on the heel  
Of limping winter treads . . .  
(2, 26–28)

**d** One fairer than my love! The all-seeing sun  
Ne'er saw her match since first the world  
began.  
(2, 85–86)

### Writing About Literature

#### Analyzing Dramatic Technique

Romeo and Juliet fall in love at first sight. How does Shakespeare convince us of this instant and mutual attraction? What do we learn about Romeo and Juliet before they meet? How does the language of their first encounter tell us that they are already deeply in love? Write a short paper in which you consider these questions.

### Personification

- 1a. The winds.
- 1b. The sun.
- 1c. April and winter.
- 1d. The sun.

### WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Remind students that the first place to look for ideas should always be the work of literature. Students should look at the dialogue and at the actions of Romeo and Juliet for evidence of how quickly they fall in love. They talk about love, hold hands, and kiss.

In Scene 1 Romeo reveals that he has been in and out of love before, but when Juliet is told to think of marriage, her response reminds the audience that she is a thirteen-year-old who has never been in love: "I'll look to like, if looking liking move." Other examples may be given to characterize the two more fully.

Students will need to analyze the precise, poetic language of the first meeting to see how deeply Romeo and Juliet are in love. Without greeting or introduction, Romeo addresses Juliet in a complex, religious metaphor. She calmly responds in a similar manner. Their conversation shows they already share the private language of lovers. A religious pilgrim's feelings for a saint's shrine go beyond love and reverence: the shrine offers the pilgrim hope of salvation. Romeo and Juliet view their love with similar intensity of emotion.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to trace the progress of Romeo and Juliet's love in Act Two. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. Light imagery is very prominent in this act. Ask students to look for especially effective uses of light imagery.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Asked "What's the center of the universe?" students may answer "Myself," "My home," "The sun," "Solar system," "God," or "I don't know." As he says in ll. 1–2 of Scene 1, Romeo thinks Juliet is the center of the universe.

## Act Two Prologue

**1** Chorus speaks this sonnet commenting on hazards and charms of Romeo and Juliet's situation.

**2** **Personification.** Both "old desire" (Romeo's love for Rosaline) and "young affection" (his love for Juliet) are personified.

**3** "Foe supposed": Juliet, a Capulet, is supposed to be an enemy to Romeo, a Montague.

**4** **Conflict.** Despite the feud between their families, Romeo and Juliet will find ways of meeting.

## Scene 1

**1** **Metaphor.** Calling his body the earth, Romeo begins series of planetary images he will use to describe Juliet.

**2** Worried about Romeo, Benvolio calls Romeo's name. Romeo, anxious to see Juliet again, remains out of sight. Though hidden, he can overhear Benvolio and Mercutio's conversation.

**3** **Irony.** Audience knows that Romeo has not, in fact, been wise. Ironic also in that Mercutio's words "on my life" foreshadow his own death as result of events set in motion by Romeo's actions.

**4** **Satirizing stereotypical lover.** Mercutio playfully calls Romeo by various names, all associated with love.

## Act Two

### Prologue

**1** [Enter Chorus.]

**2** **Chorus.** Now (old desire) doth in his deathbed lie,  
And young affection gapes to be (his) heir.

That fair for which love groaned for and would die,  
With tender Juliet matched, is now not fair.

Now Romeo is beloved and loves again,  
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks,

**3** But to his (foe supposed) he must complain, — He must tell her  
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks. — she must take love

Being held a foe, he may not have access  
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear,  
And she as much in love, her means much less  
To meet her new beloved anywhere.

**4** But passion lends them power, time means, to meet,  
Tempering extremities° with extreme sweet.

### Scene 1

[A lane by the wall of Capulet's orchard. Enter Romeo, alone.]

**Romeo.** Can I go forward when my heart is here?

**1** Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center° out.

[Enter Benvolio with Mercutio.]

**2** **Benvolio.** Romeo! My cousin Romeo!

**3** **Mercutio.** He is wise,  
And, (on my life,) hath stol'n him home to bed.

**Benvolio.** He ran this way, and leaped this orchard wall.  
Call, good Mercutio.

**Mercutio.** Nay, I'll conjure° too.

**4** **Romeo!** Humors! Madman! Passion! Lover!  
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh.

Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied,  
Cry but "aye me!" pronounce but "love" and "dove."

1. **old desire:** Romeo's love for Rosaline. 6. **Alike:** equally. 14. **extremities:** great difficulties.  
2. **earth:** body. **center:** the center of the universe—that is, Juliet. 6. **conjure:** call up a spirit.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this act, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 66 / Selection Test 42 / Reading Check 39 / Vocabulary Test 24 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 53

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

After the Capulets' party, Romeo hopes for another glimpse of Juliet. He leaps a wall into the Capulets' orchard and hides from Benvolio and Mercutio. Romeo sees a light in Juliet's window and compares her to a glorious sun. She comes

to the window, and Romeo overhears her romantic thoughts about him. She says she loves him despite his name. When Romeo speaks out, offering to change his name, Juliet is dismayed at his presence, fearful for his safety, and embarrassed that he has heard her **soliloquy**.

## PRESENTATION

Let students trace the progress of love in the balcony scene. Each lover wonders about the other and privately expresses admiration. Romeo is willing to change his name if it is an obstacle to love. Juliet fears for his safety and fears Romeo

- 15  
16  
17
- Speak to my gossip<sup>o</sup> Venus one fair word,  
One nickname for her purblind<sup>o</sup> son and heir,  
Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim  
When King Cophetua<sup>o</sup> loved the beggar maid!  
He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not.  
The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.  
I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,  
By her high forehead and her scarlet lip,  
By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,  
And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,  
That in thy likeness thou appear to us!

**Benvolio.** And if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

**Mercutio.** This cannot anger him. 'Twould anger him  
To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle  
Of some strange nature, letting it there stand  
Till she had laid it and conjured it down.  
That were some spite. My invocation  
Is fair and honest, and in his mistress' name  
I conjure only but to raise up him.

- 8 **Benvolio.** Come, he hath hid himself among these trees,  
To be consorted<sup>o</sup> with the humorus<sup>o</sup> night.

- 9 **Blind** is his love, and **best befits the dark**.

**Mercutio.** If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark.

Now will he sit under a medlar<sup>o</sup> tree,  
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit  
As maids call medlars when they laugh alone.  
Oh, Romeo, that she were, Oh, that she were  
An open et cetera, thou a poperin pear!  
Romeo, good night. I'll to my truckle bed,<sup>o</sup>  
This field bed is too cold for me to sleep.  
Come, shall we go?

**Benvolio.** Go then, for 'tis in vain  
To seek him here that means not to be found.

## Scene 2

- 1 **Romeo.** He jests<sup>o</sup> at scars that never felt a wound.

11. **gossip:** friend. 12. **purblind:** dim-sighted. 14. **King Cophetua:** the hero of a ballad, who married a beggar maid.  
31. **consorted:** associated. **humorous:** moody. 34. **medlar:** a tree that produces a fruit like an apple. 39. **truckle bed:**  
trundle bed, a baby bed pushed under the great bed during the daytime.  
1. **jest:** laughs, jokes.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene,  
see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 67*

## 53

Good archers were often nicknamed Adam, after Adam Bell, great and famous archer.

## 6

Mercutio makes fun of love, providing a point of view different from Romeo's.

## 7

Irony. Mercutio, knowing nothing of Juliet, assumes that Romeo is still in love with Rosaline and describes her in mocking terms.

## 8

Benvolio realizes sooner than Mercutio that Romeo does not want to be found.

## 9

A rendering of the proverb "Love is blind."

## 10

**Poperin pear:** type of pear grown at Poperinghe in Flanders, a region of western Belgium and northern France.

## Scene 2

## 1

What does Romeo mean? That Mercutio can joke about love because he has never been deeply wounded by love.



will think her too easily won. His vows reassure her, and she speaks her own heart. She is first to speak of marriage. He promises to send word of wedding arrangements. They linger over the "sweet sorrow" of parting.

Ask students to point out lines that show

Romeo and Juliet love each other spiritually (in keeping with the Renaissance concept of adoration and devotion) and long to be together, "forgetting any other home but this." Ask students to give two good reasons why Juliet speaks soon of marriage. (She wants their love to be

honorable; she does not want to wed Paris.)

If possible, present a recording or a film that interprets the poetry of this love scene. Ask students which lines they think are most romantic.

Students should look carefully at ll. 1-25 of

2

Here begins famous "balcony scene" in which Romeo and Juliet profess their love for each other. It takes place in darkness; thus, Romeo can remain hidden until he chooses to reveal himself.

3

**Personification.** Romeo calls the moon "envious." It is not as bright as the sun or Juliet.

4

"Thou her maid" refers to Juliet. Diana, goddess of the moon and of the hunt, is also goddess of chastity.

5

The vestal virgins of Rome were consecrated to maintaining the sacred fire in temple of Vesta, goddess of the hearth.

6

Juliet appears in the window. Dramatic device of eavesdropping is very important in advancing love story.

7

Though audience knows Juliet is in love with Romeo, Romeo at this point cannot be sure. He is reluctant to show himself.

8

**Imagery.** Light is used throughout scene to describe Juliet. She is associated in Romeo's mind with the sun, daylight, stars, and heaven.

9

Juliet believes herself to be alone and speaks her thoughts aloud.

10

Although Juliet is addressing Romeo, she does not know that he is there.

[Juliet appears above at a window.]

2

But, soft! **What light through yonder window breaks?**

It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!

3

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,

Who is already sick and pale with grief

4

That thou her maid art far more fair than she.

Be not her maid, since she is envious.

5

**Her** vestal livery<sup>o</sup> is but sick and green,

moon

And none but fools do wear it. Cast it off.

6

It is my lady, oh, it is my love!

Oh, that she knew she were! *if she knew Romeo loved her*

She speaks, yet she says nothing. What of that?

Her eye discourses,<sup>o</sup> I will answer it. *will look at her.*

7

I am too bold, 'tis not to me she speaks. *thinks she's talking to me but she's not*

8

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,

Having some business, do entreat her eyes

To twinkle in their spheres<sup>o</sup> till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars

As daylight doth a lamp; her eyes in heaven

Would through the airy region stream so bright

That birds would sing and think it were not night.

See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!

Oh, that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek!

*- Speaking lovely.*

9

**Juliet.**

Aye me!

**Romeo.** [*Softly, to himself*]

She speaks.

Oh, speak again, bright angel! For thou art

As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,

As is a winged messenger of Heaven

Unto the white-upturned wondering eyes

Of mortals that fall back to gaze on him

When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds

And sails upon the bosom of the air.

10

**Juliet.** O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore<sup>o</sup> art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name,

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

**Romeo.** [*Aside*] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

**Juliet.** 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.

*← compares Juliet to the moon is pale that Juliet is prettier*

*2 stars are busy. so they ask Juliet's eyes to fill in. If they switched places, stars would not be bright*

8. **vestal livery:** maiden's dress. 13. **discourses:** speaks. 17. **spheres:** orbits. 33. **wherefore:** why.

- Thou art thyself, though not<sup>39</sup> a Montague.  
 What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,  
 Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part  
 Belonging to a man. Oh, be some other name!
- 11** What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
 By any other name would smell as sweet.  
 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
 Retain that dear perfection which he owes<sup>40</sup>
- 12** Without that title. Romeo, doff<sup>41</sup> thy name,  
 And for thy name, which is no part of thee,  
 Take all myself.
- Romeo.** [Aloud] I take thee at thy word.  
 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptized.  
 Henceforth I never will be Romeo.
- Juliet.** What man art thou that, thus bescreened in night,  
**13** So stumblest on my counsel?<sup>42</sup>
- Romeo.** By a name  
 I know not how to tell thee who I am.
- 14** My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself  
 Because it is an enemy to thee.  
 Had I it written, I would tear the word.
- Juliet.** My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words  
 Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.  
 Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?
- Romeo.** Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.<sup>43</sup>
- Juliet.** How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
 The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
**15** And the place death, considering who thou art,  
 If any of my kinsmen find thee here.
- Romeo.** With love's light wings did I o'erperch<sup>44</sup> these walls,  
 For stony limits cannot hold love out.  
 And what love can do, that dares love attempt,  
 Therefore thy kinsmen are no let<sup>45</sup> to me.
- 16 Juliet.** If they do see thee, they will murder thee. ~
- Romeo.** Alack, there lies more peril in thine eye  
 Than twenty of their swords. Look thou but sweet,  
 And I am proof<sup>46</sup> against their enmity.
- Juliet.** I would not for the world they saw thee here.
- Romeo.** I have night's cloak to hide me from their eyes,  
 And but<sup>47</sup> thou love me, let them find me here. ✓

~ so she associates Romeo w/ a rose.  
 what's the rose, a symbol of love. 40

what happens? 45

**11**

**Analogy.** Juliet argues that the name of something does not affect its essence. The analogy associates Romeo with the rose, symbol of love and beauty.

**12**

**Why does Juliet tell Romeo to "doff" his name?** Because it is his name that keeps them apart.

**13**

Her **soliloquy** interrupted, Juliet is startled but quickly recognizes intruder to be Romeo.

**14**

"Dear saint" recalls extended saint/pilgrim **metaphor** of first meeting.

**15**

Juliet is concerned for his safety.

**16**

While Romeo is confident that love can overcome all obstacles, Juliet is soberly realistic.

39. **though not**: even if you were not. 40. **owes**: owns. 41. **doff**: remove. 42. **counsel**: innermost thoughts. 43. **dislike**: displease. 44. **o'erperch**: climb over. 45. **let**: hindrance, obstacle. 46. **proof**: armored, safe. 47. **And but**: unless.

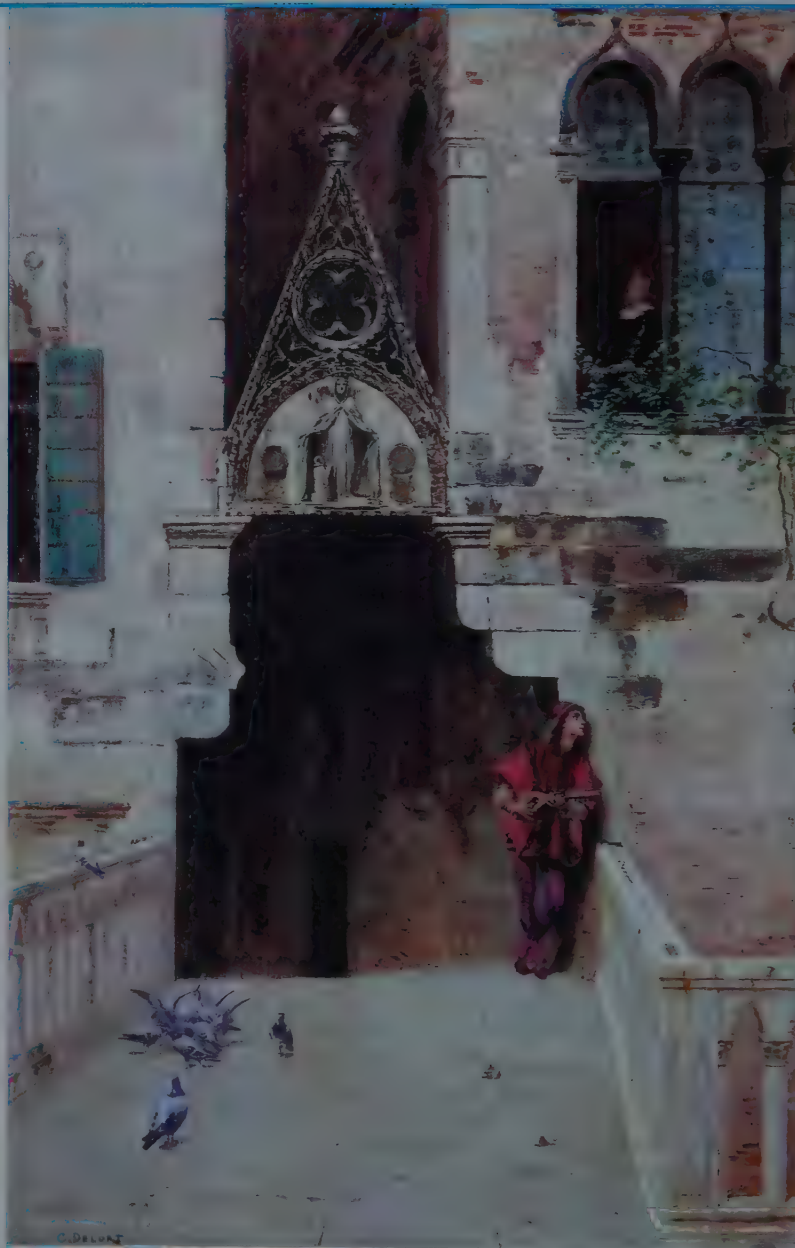
### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### About the Artist

Charles Edward Delort, a French painter, specialized in what are called genre paintings—scenes that tell a story.

#### Ideas for Writing

Draw students' attention to the dreamlike quality of the painting. Romeo leans against the wall, romantically serenading the wistful Juliet in the window above. Note that neither looks directly at the other, almost as if actually seeing each other is unnecessary. Ask students to write paragraphs in which they consider how much the two lovers may have idealized each other. Students may wish to question Romeo's elevation of Juliet to near goddesslike status.



Private Collection, Courtesy Kurt Schon, Ltd.

*Romeo and Juliet—Capulet's Garden* by Charles Edward Delort (1841–1895). Oil on panel. Romeo is depicted with a lute, the instrument associated with courtship.



My life were better ended by their hate  
Than death proroguèd,<sup>o</sup> wanting of<sup>o</sup> thy love.

**Juliet.** By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

**Romeo.** By love, that first did prompt me to inquire.

17 He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.

18 I am no pilot, yet wert thou as far  
As that vast shore washed with the farthest sea,  
I would adventure for such merchandise.

**Juliet.** Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face,  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak tonight.

19 Fain<sup>o</sup> would I dwell on form,<sup>o</sup> fain, fain deny  
What I have spoke. But farewell compliment!<sup>o</sup>  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say "Aye,"  
And I will take thy word. Yet if thou swear'st,

20 Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries  
They say Jove<sup>o</sup> laughs. O gentle Romeo,

21 If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.  
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown and be perverse and say thee nay,  
So<sup>o</sup> thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.

In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,<sup>o</sup>  
And therefore thou mayst think my 'havior light.

But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.<sup>o</sup>

I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,<sup>o</sup>

My true love's passion. Therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.<sup>o</sup>

**Romeo.** Lady, by yonder blessed moon I swear,  
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops—

22 **Juliet.** Oh, swear not by the moon, th' inconstant moon,  
That monthly changes in her circled orb,<sup>o</sup>  
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

**Romeo.** What shall I swear by?

**Juliet.** Do not swear at all.

23 Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,  
Which is the god of my idolatry,  
And I'll believe thee.

78. **proroguèd** (prō-rōg' əd): postponed. **wanting of**: lacking. 88. **Fain**: gladly. **dwell on form**: behave in the customary way. 89. **compliment**: polite manners. 93. **Jove** (jōv): in classical mythology, the ruler of the gods. 97. **So**: so long as. 98. **fond**: foolishly affectionate. 101. **strange**: cold, distant. 103. **ware**: aware. 106. **discovered**: revealed. 110. **orb**: orbit.

80

85

90

95

100

105

17

"Lent him eyes" is another allusion to Cupid's blindness.

18

**Metaphor.** Images of seafaring are used by Romeo to describe love for Juliet. Shakespeare's countrymen were famous sailors.

19

Although Juliet would rather not have revealed her love so soon, she knows that what has been done cannot be undone.

20

**Allusion.** Her remark that Jove, chief Roman god, did not take lovers and their promises seriously indicates Juliet is aware that falsehoods are told in heat of passion.

21

What else worries Juliet about what has just happened? She fears that Romeo may think her too easily won.

22

The moon is symbol of change and inconstancy. In the prevailing thought of the time, all beneath moon's orbit was changeable; all above, eternal, unchanging.

23

To Juliet, Romeo is more believable than anything he might swear by.

24

Is Juliet correct when she says that this engagement has been "too sudden"? Responses will vary. Their love has not had time to prove itself a lasting one, and the situation is dangerous because of the feud between the families.

25

Imagery. Juliet prefers to think of love more as something that grows like a bud than something that strikes like lightning.

26

Call of Nurse reminds audience that Romeo is in danger; also provides reason for his departure.

27

For a moment, Romeo is afraid that this is all a dream. His words are reminder of Mercutio's Queen Mab speech.

28

Juliet is in love but is also practical. She is first to speak of marriage and wants to know whether Romeo's intentions are honorable.

29

Despite her previous reluctance, Juliet is willing to marry Romeo as soon as possible.

Romeo.

If my heart's dear love—

115

Juliet. Well, do not swear. Although I joy in thee,

I have no joy of this contract<sup>o</sup> tonight.

24

It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,  
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be  
Ere one can say "It lightens." Sweet, good night!

120

25

This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,  
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.  
Good night, good night! As sweet repose and rest  
Come to thy heart as that within my breast!

Romeo. Oh, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

125

Juliet. What satisfaction canst thou have tonight?

26

Romeo. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Juliet. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it,

And yet I would it were to give again.

Romeo. Wouldst thou withdraw it? For what purpose, love?

130

Juliet. But to be frank,<sup>o</sup> and give it thee again.

And yet I wish but for the thing I have.

My bounty<sup>o</sup> is as boundless as the sea,

My love as deep; the more I give to thee,

The more I have, for both are infinite.

135

26

I hear some noise within. Dear love, adieu!

[Nurse calls within.<sup>o</sup>]

Anon,<sup>o</sup> good Nurse! Sweet Montague, be true.

Stay but a little, I will come again.

[Exit]

27

Romeo. Oh, blessed, blessed night! I am afeard,

Being in night, all this is but a dream,

Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.<sup>o</sup>

140

[Reenter Juliet, above.]

Juliet. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night indeed.

28

If that thy bent<sup>o</sup> of love be honorable,  
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow  
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,  
Where and what time thou wilt perform the rite,

145

29

And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,

And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

117. contract: betrothal. 131. frank: generous. 133. bounty: generosity. S.D. within: off stage. 137. Anon: in a minute. 141. substantial: real. 143. bent: intention.

- Nurse. *[Within]* Madam!
- Juliet. I come, anon.—But if thou mean'st not well, I do beseech thee—— 150
- 30 Nurse. *[Within]* Madam!
- Juliet. By and by, I come— }  
To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief.  
Tomorrow will I send.
- Romeo. So thrive my soul——
- Juliet. A thousand times good night! *[Exit.]*
- 31 Romeo. A thousand times the worse, to want thy light. 155  
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books,  
But love from love toward school with heavy looks. } *[Retiring slowly.]*
- 32 *[Reenter Juliet, above.]*
- 33 Juliet. Hist! Romeo, hist!—Oh, for a falconer's<sup>o</sup> voice,  
To lure this tassel-gentle<sup>o</sup> back again!  
Bondage is hoarse,<sup>o</sup> and may not speak aloud,  
Else would I tear the cave where Echo<sup>o</sup> lies 160  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine  
With repetition of my Romeo's name.
- Romeo. It is my soul that calls upon my name.  
How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,  
Like softest music to attending<sup>o</sup> ears! 165
- Juliet. Romeo!
- 34 Romeo. My dear?
- Juliet. At what o'clock tomorrow  
Shall I send to thee?
- Romeo. At the hour of nine.
- 35 Juliet. I will not fail. 'Tis twenty years till then. —  
I have forgot why I did call thee back.
- Romeo. Let me stand here till thou remember it.
- Juliet. I shall forget, to have thee still stand here,  
Remembering how I love thy company.
- Romeo. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,  
Forgetting any other home but this. 170
- 36 Juliet. 'Tis almost morning. I would have thee gone,  
And yet no farther than a wanton's<sup>o</sup> bird,  
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,  
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,<sup>o</sup>

158. **falconer**: keeper of hawks. 159. **tassel-gentle**: male falcon. 160. **Bondage is hoarse**: that is, being under the control of my parents, I must whisper. 161. **Echo**: in classical mythology, a wood nymph. Rejected by the man she loved, Echo retired to a cave and pined away until all that was left of her was her voice. 166. **attending**: attentive. 177. **wanton**: spoiled child. 179. **gyves** (jivz): fetters.

### 30

**Suspense.** Repeated calls of Nurse create tension. Romeo is in danger of being discovered with Juliet.

### 31

**Imagery.** Romeo again compares Juliet to light.

### 32

Repeated entrances and exits create breathless, urgent atmosphere.

### 33

**Imagery.** Juliet is afraid to call out to Romeo. Using images taken from falconry, she speaks softly but with great intensity.

### 34

While Romeo is caught up in ecstasy of love, Juliet pays attention to practical details.

### 35

Juliet's exaggeration and her forgetfulness suggest the overwhelming nature of her emotions.

### 36

She knows that Romeo must leave, yet she wants him near.



## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The passage underscored below can be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying an accurate generalization. Make sure students understand all the vocabulary in this passage. Then pose the question: Which of the

following statements draws the most accurate generalization from Friar Laurence's words about the innate goodness or badness of things? A. Things may be totally bad or good. (Contradicted.) B. The different qualities of things make it difficult to distinguish between virtue and vice.

(Contradicted.) C. All things are either good or bad according to how they are used. (Correct.) D. All things are capable of causing death if misused. (Unsupported.)

37

**Figure of speech.** "Parting is such sweet sorrow" has become part of everyday language. *Sweet sorrow* is an oxymoron, the figure of speech which combines apparently contradictory terms.

38

Closing heroic couplet leads reader directly into next scene.

## Scene 3

1

Preparing to gather his weeds and flowers, Friar Laurence speaks soliloquy on the bounty of earth.

2

**Personification.** Nature is personified in opening lines. Images of light and darkness are mixed. Friar Laurence sees a world in which nothing is all white or all black.

3

Friar Laurence's long reflection on the nature of drugs is important. In addition to priestly duties, Friar Laurence is a kind of apothecary or pharmacist.

4

Friar Laurence notes that all things have potential for good or for ill.

And with a silk thread plucks it back again,  
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

180

**Romeo.** I would I were thy bird. ➔

**Juliet.** Sweet, so would I.

Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.

37 Good night, good night! Parting is such sweet sorrow  
That I shall say good night till it be morrow.

[Exit.] 185

**Romeo.** Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!

Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!

38 Hence will I to my ghostly<sup>o</sup> father's cell,  
His help to crave and my dear hap<sup>o</sup> to tell.

[Exit.]

## Scene 3

1 [Friar Laurence's cell. Enter Friar Laurence, with a basket.]

2 **Friar Laurence.** The gray-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night,

Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light,

And fleckèd<sup>o</sup> darkness like a drunkard reels

From forth day's path and Titan's<sup>o</sup> fiery wheels.

Now, ere the sun advance his burning eye,

The day to cheer and night's dank dew to dry,

I must upfill<sup>o</sup> this osier cage<sup>o</sup> of ours

With baleful<sup>o</sup> weeds and precious-juicèd flowers.

5

► The earth that's Nature's mother is her tomb,

What is her burying grave, that is her womb.

And from her womb children of divers kind

We sucking on her natural bosom find,

Many for many virtues excellent,

None but for some, and yet all different.

Oh, mickle<sup>o</sup> is the powerful grace<sup>o</sup> that lies

3 In herbs, plants, stones, and their true qualities.

For naught so vile that on the earth doth live,

But to the earth some special good doth give;

Nor aught so good but, strained<sup>o</sup> from that fair use,

4 Revolts from true birth,<sup>o</sup> stumbling on abuse.<sup>o</sup>

Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,

And vice sometime's by action dignified. ◀

10

15

20

it'll be mixed  
either good or bad  
depending on how they  
are used.

188. **ghostly**: spiritual. 189. **hap**: luck.

3. **flecked**: spotted. 4. **Titan**: the sun. In classical mythology, the sun god drove his chariot across the sky. 7. **upfill**: fill up. **osier cage**: wicker basket. 8. **baleful**: poisonous. 15. **mickle**: great. **grace**: goodness. 19. **strained**: turned aside. 20. **Revolts from true birth**: turns away from its true function. **abuse**: misuse.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the **Teacher's Literature Companion**: Study Guide 68

► Reading Skills Objective. Identifying an Accurate Generalization

5 Within the infant rind of this small flower  
Poison hath residence, and medicine power.  
For this, being smelt, with that part cheers each part,  
Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.<sup>o</sup>  
Two such opposèd kings encamp them still<sup>o</sup>  
In man as well as herbs, grace and rude will;<sup>o</sup>  
And where the worser is predominant,<sup>o</sup>  
Full soon the canker<sup>o</sup>death eats up that plant. 25 30

6 [Enter Romeo.]

Romeo. Good morrow, Father.

Friar Laurence. Benedicite!

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?  
Young son, it argues a distempered<sup>o</sup> head  
So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed.  
Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,  
And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;  
But where unbruised youth with unstuffed brain  
Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign.  
Therefore thy earliness doth me assure  
Thou art uproused by some distemperature.<sup>o</sup>  
Or if not so, then here I hit it right,  
Our Romeo hath not been in bed tonight. 35 40

Romeo. That last is true. The sweeter rest was mine.

8 Friar Laurence. God pardon sin! Wast thou with Rosaline?

Romeo. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? No.  
I have forgot that name and that name's woe. 45

Friar Laurence. That's my good son. But where has thou been, then?

9 Romeo. I'll tell thee ere thou ask it me again.  
I have been feasting with mine enemy,  
Where on a sudden one hath wounded me  
That's by me wounded. Both our remedies  
Within thy help and holy physic<sup>o</sup> lies.  
I bear no hatred; blessed man, for, lo,  
My intercession<sup>o</sup> likewise steads<sup>o</sup> my foe. 50

Friar Laurence. Be plain, good son, and homely<sup>o</sup> in thy drift.<sup>o</sup> 55

10 Riddling<sup>o</sup> confession finds but riddling shrift.<sup>o</sup>

24-26. **Poison . . . heart:** The plant can be used as a poison or as a restorative: if smelled, it acts as a stimulant; if tasted, it is deadly. 27. **still:** always. 28. **rude will:** the natural desire for evil. 29. **predominant:** stronger. 30. **canker:** worm. 33. **distempered:** disturbed. 40. **distemperature:** sickness. 52. **physic:** remedy. 54. **intercession:** prayer, plea. **steads:** benefits. 55. **homely:** simple, plain. **drift:** speech. 56. **Riddling:** speaking in riddles. **shrif:** forgiveness.

5 What quality does Friar Laurence observe? A plant may heal or kill. Similarly, a person may act from goodness or from evil. If evil predominates, person is destroyed by it.

6 It is ironic that Romeo, who is to die by poison, should enter as Friar is discussing it.

7 Does the Friar think a young person likes to be up early? No. Suspects Romeo is either worrying about something or has not been in bed at all.

8 Friar Laurence assumes that Romeo has been with Rosaline and is surprised and pleased to hear that Romeo no longer thinks of her.

9 Metaphor. Romeo speaks of falling in love with Juliet, a Capulet, in terms of battle. Friar Laurence, however, is confused by Romeo's riddles.

10 Friar Laurence has had enough and, as Romeo's confessor, commands him to speak more plainly.

11  
"As we pass": As we walk together.

12  
Friar Laurence is understandably surprised at Romeo's confession of new love. Less than a day ago he was still moping after Rosaline.

13  
Friar Laurence pretends that Romeo's sighs have darkened skies so much that the sun has not yet been able to break through.

14  
"Doting" suggests Friar knows that Romeo's feeling for Rosaline was infatuation, not real love.

15  
Rosaline knew that Romeo was in love with only the idea of being in love.

16  
Irony. Friar Laurence thinks that a marriage may bring an end to feud between their two houses. It does, though not in way he anticipates.

17  
Dramatic irony. Because audience is already aware of the outcome of the action, this advice means more to them than Friar Laurence and Romeo can know.

Romeo. Then plainly know my heart's dear love is set  
On the fair daughter of rich Capulet.

As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine,  
And all combined<sup>60</sup> save what thou must combine  
By holy marriage. When, and where, and how,  
We met, we wooed and made exchange of vow,  
11 I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,  
That thou consent to marry us today.

12 Friar Laurence. Holy Saint Francis, what a change is here!

Is Rosaline, that thou didst love so dear,  
So soon forsaken? Young men's love then lies  
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.

Jesu Maria, what a deal of brine  
Hath washed thy fallow cheeks for Rosaline!  
How much salt water thrown away in waste,  
To season<sup>72</sup> love, that of it doth not taste!

13 The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,  
Thy old groans ring yet in mine ancient ears.  
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit  
Of an old tear that is not washed off yet.

If e'er thou wast thyself and these woes thine,  
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline.

And art thou changed? Pronounce this sentence<sup>79</sup> then—  
Women may fall when there's no strength in men.

Romeo. Thou chid'st<sup>81</sup> me oft for loving Rosaline.

14 Friar Laurence. ~~For doting, not for loving, pupil mine.~~

Romeo. And bad'st me bury love.

Friar Laurence. Not in a grave  
To lay one in, another out to have.

Romeo. I pray thee, chide not. She whom I love now  
Doth grace for grace and love for love allow.  
The other did not so.

Friar Laurence. Oh, she knew well

15 Thy love did read by rote<sup>82</sup> and could not spell.  
But come, young waverer, come, go with me,  
In one respect I'll thy assistant be;

16 For this alliance may so happy prove,  
To turn your households' rancor<sup>92</sup> to pure love.

Romeo. Oh, let us hence. I stand on sudden haste.<sup>93</sup>

17 Friar Laurence. Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast.

[Exeunt.]

-HE ASKS SAME QUESTION  
THAT WE DID!

Juliet loves him back.  
Rosaline did not.

How is this ironic?  
Did it bring an end?  
How?

60. combined: united. 72. season: keep fresh, as meat is preserved by salt. 79. sentence: proverb. 81. chid'st: scolded. 88. by rote: by heart. 92. rancor: hatred. 93. stand on sudden haste: am impatient.



## Scene 4

[A street. Enter Benvolio and Mercutio.]

**Mercutio.** Where the devil should this Romeo be?

Came he not home tonight?

**Benvolio.** Not to his father's, I spoke with his man.<sup>o</sup>

1 **Mercutio.** Ah, that same pale hardhearted wench, that Rosaline,  
Torments him so that he will sure run mad.

2 **Benvolio.** Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,  
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

**Mercutio.** A challenge, on my life.

**Benvolio.** Romeo will answer it.

**Mercutio.** Any man that can write may answer a letter.

**Benvolio.** Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dared.

**Mercutio.** Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead! Stabbed with a white wench's black eye,  
shot thorough the ear with a love song, the very pin<sup>o</sup> of his heart cleft with the blind  
3 bowboy's butt shaft.<sup>o</sup> And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

**Benvolio.** Why, what is Tybalt?

**Mercutio.** More than Prince of Cats,<sup>o</sup> I can tell you. Oh, he's the courageous captain of  
compliments.<sup>o</sup> He fights as you sing prick song,<sup>o</sup> keeps time, distance, and proportion;  
4 rests me his minim<sup>o</sup> rest, one, two, and the third in your bosom. The very butcher of a  
silk button, a duelist, a duelist, a gentleman of the very first house,<sup>o</sup> of the first and sec-  
5 ond cause.<sup>o</sup> Ah, the immortal passado! The punto reverso! The hai!<sup>o</sup>

**Benvolio.** The what?

6 **Mercutio.** The pox of such antic, lisping, affecting fantasticoes,<sup>o</sup> these new tuners of accents!  
"By Jesu, a very good blade! A very tall<sup>o</sup> man!" Why, is not this a lamentable thing,  
Grandsire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-  
mongers, these perdona-mi's<sup>o</sup> who stand so much on the new form that they cannot sit  
at ease on the old bench? Oh, their bones,<sup>o</sup> their bones!

[Enter Romeo no longer melancholy]

**Benvolio.** Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

7 **Mercutio.** Without his roe, like a dried herring. Oh, flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified! Now  
is he for the numbers<sup>o</sup> that Petrarch flow'd in. Laura to his lady was but a kitchen

3. **man:** servant. 13. **pin:** center of the target. 13–14. **blind bowboy's butt shaft:** Cupid's blunt arrow. A butt shaft, an unpointed arrow, was used in target practice. 16. **Prince of Cats:** In stories of Reynard the fox, Tybalt is Prince of Cats. 16–17. **captain of compliments:** expert in fashionable behavior. **prick song:** melody accompanying a song. 18. **minim rest:** the shortest rest. 19. **first house:** finest school. **first and second cause:** the reasons that caused a gentleman to issue a challenge to a duel. 20. **passado . . . hai:** dueling terms. The *passado* is a lunge; *punto reverso* is a backhand stroke; *hai* is the cry as the fencer thrusts home. 22. **fantasticoes:** fantastical fellows. 23. **tall:** brave. 25. **perdona-mi's:** Italian for "pardon me." 26. **bones:** wordplay on *bon*, the French word for "good." 29. **numbers:** verses. Petrarch wrote sonnets to a woman named Laura.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 69

## Scene 4

1

**Irony.** Mercutio and Benvolio still do not know that Romeo no longer thinks of Rosaline.

2

**How does Shakespeare's treatment of the Montagues differ from that of the Capulets?** Audience is shown much about Romeo's friends but little of his immediate family. However, audience is shown a great deal about Juliet's family but sees little of her friends or other kinsmen. In this way, Shakespeare creates interest and variety.

3

**Why is Tybalt's challenge bad news?** Mercutio thinks love-smitten Romeo is no match for a practiced fencer like Tybalt.

4

Professional fencer would wager to touch his opponent on any button of his clothing.

5

Mercutio is mocking Tybalt because he uses rapier, not long sword.

6

Mercutio ridicules affected manner and speech of fashion-mongers.

7

To tease Romeo, Mercutio compares Rosaline with other amorous ladies of history and legend. Mercutio says she surpasses them all.

8 Mercutio belittles famous lovers of past in ways insulting to the women. Shakespeare may have created one of the greatest love stories of all time, but he reminds us that such stories may be viewed from other than romantic perspective.

9 Mercutio greets Romeo in French to match French style of Romeo's baggy breeches.

10 **Pun.** When Mercutio and Romeo meet, the pun is the medium of exchange. Young gallants of Shakespeare's time enjoyed puns with double and triple meanings.

11 Romeo is Mercutio's match as they joust with words. At this point, Mercutio mockingly admits to being bested by Romeo.

12 Romeo tells Mercutio to urge his wit on with switch and spurs as if it were a horse.

13 Mercutio is pleased to see Romeo showing spirit and wit instead of pining for Rosaline. But Mercutio does not know the reason.

8 wench—marry, she had a better love to berhyme her—Dido, a dowdy;<sup>°</sup> Cleopatra, a gypsy; Helen and Hero, hildings<sup>°</sup> and harlots; Thisbe, a gray eye or so, but not to the purpose. Signior Romeo, *bon jour!*—there's a French salutation to your French slop.<sup>°</sup>  
9 You gave us the counterfeit<sup>°</sup> fairly last night.  
10

**Romeo.** Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit did I give you?

**Mercutio.** The slip, sir, the slip. Can you not conceive?

**Romeo.** Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great, and in such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

**Mercutio.** That's as much as to say, Such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

**Romeo.** Meaning, to curtsy.

**Mercutio.** Thou hast most kindly hit it.

**Romeo.** A most courteous exposition.

**Mercutio.** Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

**Romeo.** Pink for flower.

**Mercutio.** Right.

**Romeo.** Why, then is my pump well flowered.<sup>°</sup>

**Mercutio.** Well said. Follow me this jest now till thou has worn out thy pump, that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

**Romeo.** Oh, single-soled jest, solely singular for the singleness!

11 **Mercutio.** Come between us, good Benvolio. My wits faint.

12 **Romeo.** Switch and spurs,<sup>°</sup> switch and spurs, or I'll cry a match.<sup>°</sup>

**Mercutio.** Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase,<sup>°</sup> I have done; for thou has more of the wild goose in one of thy wits than, I am sure, I have in my whole five. Was I with you there for the goose?<sup>°</sup>

**Romeo.** Thou wast never with me for anything when thou wast not there for the goose.

**Mercutio.** I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

**Romeo.** Nay, good goose, bite not.

**Mercutio.** Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting, it is a most sharp sauce.

**Romeo.** And is it not well served in to a sweet goose?

**Mercutio.** Oh, here's a wit of cheveril,<sup>°</sup> that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

**Romeo.** I stretch it out for that word "broad," which, added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

13 **Mercutio.** Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? Now art thou sociable, now are thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature. For this driveling love is like a great natural<sup>°</sup> that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble<sup>°</sup> in a hole.

**Benvolio.** Stop there, stop there.

**Mercutio.** Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair.<sup>°</sup>

30. **dowdy:** a slovenly woman. 31. **hildings:** wretches. 32. **slop:** baggy breeches. 33. **counterfeit:** A counterfeit coin was called a slip. 45. **pump . . . flowered:** My shoe is pinked, or punched, with a pattern of flowers. 50. **Switch and spurs:** at full gallop. I'll . . . **match:** If you can't keep up this contest of wits, I claim the bet. 51. **wild-goose chase:** In this race the second horseman has to follow wherever the first horseman leads. 53. **Was . . . goose:** Have I proved you to be a goose? 59. **cheveril:** kid skin. 64. **natural:** fool. **bauble:** the fool's stick, which had a doll's head. 67. **against the hair:** contrary to one's nature.

**Benvolio.** Thou wouldst else have made thy tale large.

**Mercutio.** Oh, thou art deceived—I would have made it short. For I was come to the whole depth of my tale, and meant indeed to occupy the argument no longer.

**Romeo.** Here's goodly gear!<sup>70</sup>

14 [Enter Nurse and Peter]

15 **Mercutio.** A sail, a sail!

**Benvolio.** Two, two—a shirt and a smock.<sup>71</sup>

**Nurse.** Peter!

**Peter.** Anon?

16 **Nurse.** My fan, Peter.

17 **Mercutio.** Good Peter, to hide her face, for her fan's the fairer face.

**Nurse.** God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

**Mercutio.** God ye good-den, fair gentlewoman.

**Nurse.** Is it good-den?<sup>72</sup>

**Mercutio.** 'Tis no less.

**Nurse.** Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

**Romeo.** I can tell you, but young Romeo will be older when you have found him than he was when you sought him. I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

**Nurse.** You say well.

**Mercutio.** Yea, is the worst well? Very well took,<sup>73</sup> i' faith—wisely, wisely.

18 **Nurse.** If you be he, sir, I desire some confidence<sup>74</sup> with you.

**Benvolio.** She will indite<sup>75</sup> him to some supper.

**Mercutio.** Romeo, will you come to your father's? We'll to dinner thither.

**Romeo.** I will follow you.

**Mercutio.** Farewell, ancient lady, farewell [singing], "lady, lady, lady."

[Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.]

**Nurse.** Marry, farewell! I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant was this, that was so full of his ropery?<sup>76</sup>

19 **Romeo.** A gentleman, Nurse, that loves to hear himself talk, and will speak more in a minute than he will stand to in a month.

**Nurse.** An a' speak anything against me, I'll take him down, an a' were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks;<sup>77</sup> and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills,<sup>78</sup> I am none of his skainsmates.<sup>79</sup> [Turning to Peter] And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

20 **Peter.** I saw no man use you at his pleasure. If I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you. I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel and the law on my side.

71. gear: stuff. 73. shirt . . . smock: a man and a woman. 80. good-den: afternoon. 86. took: understood. 87. confidence: for "conference." The Nurse uses long words but doesn't always know their meaning. 88. indite: for "invite." 93. ropery: for "roguey." 97. Jacks: knaves. 98. flirt-gills: loose women. skainsmates: gangsters.

14

Nurse is Juliet's messenger. She does not know Romeo and others. Likewise, she is a stranger to them.

15

**Metaphor.** An Elizabethan woman with her many petticoats might look like sailing ship coming into view.

16

Ladies carried small fans to cool themselves, to cover their faces for modesty, to flirt, and to show status. An uneducated woman, Nurse gives herself ladylike airs.

17

Mercutio makes fun of Nurse.

18

Nurse's word makes some sense because she does wish to speak in "confidence" with Romeo, but her listeners spot the word as a blunder.

19

Romeo is sympathetic to Nurse and, in effect, tells her to ignore Mercutio—that he is "all talk."

20

Peter says that he is as ready as any man to fight, though his words suggest that he would fight only if he saw little danger to himself.



21

**Characterization.** Nurse's rambling speech shows she is completely flustered after encounter with Mercutio.

22

**What does the Nurse want to know before she accepts any message for Juliet?** Wants to be sure Romeo's intentions are honorable.

23

Nurse may be playing the grand lady in this scene, but probably she accepts Romeo's money.

24

**What are the wedding plans?** In afternoon, Juliet is to use confession as an excuse to go to Friar Laurence's cell, where she will be married to Romeo. Nurse will be given a rope ladder for Romeo to use at night.

25

As Nurse prattles on, Romeo learns about Paris and his interest in Juliet.

21 **Nurse.** Now, afore God, I am so vexed that every part about me quivers. Scurvy Knave! Pray you, sir, a word. And as I told you, my young lady bade me inquire you out—  
22 what she bade me say, I will keep to myself. But first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behavior, as they say. For the gentlewoman is young, and therefore if you should deal double with her, truly it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

105

**Romeo.** Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest<sup>o</sup> unto thee—

**Nurse.** Good heart, and, i' faith, I will tell her as much. Lord, Lord, she will be a joyful woman.

110

**Romeo.** What wilt thou tell her, Nurse? Thou dost not mark<sup>o</sup> me.

**Nurse.** I will tell her, sir, that you do protest, which, as I take it, is a gentlemanlike offer.

**Romeo.** Bid her devise

Some means to come to shrift<sup>o</sup> this afternoon,

115

And there she shall at Friar Laurence' cell

Be shrived and married. Here is for thy pains.

**Nurse.** No, truly, sir, not a penny.

23 **Romeo.** Go to, I say you shall.

**Nurse.** This afternoon, sir? Well, she shall be there.

120

24 **Romeo.** And stay, good Nurse, behind the abbey wall.

Within this hour my man shall be with thee,

And bring thee cords made like a tackled stair,<sup>o</sup>

Which to the high topgallant<sup>o</sup> of my joy

Must be my convoy in the secret night.

125

Farewell. Be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains.<sup>o</sup>

Farewell. commend me to thy mistress.

**Nurse.** Now God in Heaven bless thee! Hark you, sir.

**Romeo.** What say'st thou, my dear nurse?

**Nurse.** Is your man secret? Did you ne'er hear say

130

Two may keep counsel, putting one away?<sup>o</sup>

**Romeo.** I warrant thee, my man's as true as steel.

25 **Nurse.** Well, sir, my mistress is the sweetest lady—Lord, Lord, when 'twas a little prating thing—Oh, there is a nobleman in town, one Paris, that would fain lay knife aboard;<sup>o</sup> but she, good soul, had as lieve<sup>o</sup> see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer<sup>o</sup> man. But I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout<sup>o</sup> in the versal world.<sup>o</sup> Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

135

**Romeo.** Aye, Nurse, what of that? Both with an R.

**Nurse.** Ah, mocker! That's the dog's name.<sup>o</sup> R is for the—No, I know it begins with some

140

109. **protest:** declare. 112. **mark:** pay attention to. 115. **shrift:** confession. 123. **tackled stair:** rope ladder. 124. **topgallant:** topmast. 126. **quit thy pains:** reward your trouble. 131. **Two . . . away:** Two can keep a secret—if only one of them knows of it. 134. **lay knife aboard:** get her for himself. 135. **lieve:** soon. 136. **properer:** more handsome. 137. **clout:** cloth. **versal world:** universe. 140. **dog's name:** The letter R because it suggests a growling sound.



A scene from a 1936 film version of *Romeo and Juliet*.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The 1936 film version of *Romeo and Juliet*, from MGM Studios, was produced by Irving Thalberg and directed by George Cukor. The film was shot entirely in a studio-constructed "Italy."

Although some have criticized the film for its portrayal of the roles of Romeo and Juliet and for the lavishness of its production, it is truer to the text of Shakespeare's play than the two more recent films.

- 26** other letter—and she hath the prettiest sententious<sup>o</sup> of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

**Romeo.** Commend me to thy lady.

**Nurse.** Aye, a thousand times. [*Exit Romeo.*] Peter!

**Peter.** Anon?

- 27 Nurse.** Peter, take my fan, and go before, and apace.<sup>o</sup>

[*Exeunt.*]

145

### 26

Nurse wants to tell Juliet's clever saying about Romeo and rosemary but has forgotten it.

### 27

Comically, Nurse sends her servant ahead with her fan as if she were some great lady.

141. **sententious**: for "sentence" or proverb. 146. **apace**: quickly.

## Scene 5

1

**Characterization.** Juliet's impatient concern is shown in the quick changes of her thoughts in *soliloquy*. She fears one thing, denies it, and then fears another.

2

**What common characteristic does Juliet display here?**  
Youth's impatience with age.

3

Juliet wants Peter out of hearing. She may be impatient, but she is discreet.

4

Nurse is teasing Juliet by putting on a sad face, as if she has bad news.

5

Nurse has important news and, enjoying attention, intends to draw out the telling of it as long as possible.

6

Juliet uses logic to chide Nurse for delaying the news.

## Scene 5

[Capulet's orchard. Enter Juliet, waiting impatiently for the Nurse.]

**Juliet.** The clock struck nine when I did send the nurse.

In half an hour she promised to return.

1 **P**erchance she cannot meet him. That's not so.

Oh, she is lame! Love's heralds should be thoughts,

Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,

Driving back shadows over lowering° hills.

Therefore do nimble-pinioned° doves draw love,

And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.

Now is the sun upon the highmost hill

Of this day's journey, and from nine till twelve

Is three long hours; yet she is not come.

Had she affections and warm youthful blood,

She would be as swift in motion as a ball,

My words would bandy° her to my sweet love,

And his to me.

2 **B**ut old folks, many feign as they were dead,

Unwieldily, slow, heavy and pale° as lead.

[Enter Nurse, with Peter.]

Oh, God, she comes! O honey Nurse, what news?

3 **H**ast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

**Nurse.** Peter, stay at the gate.

[Exit Peter.] 20

**Juliet.** Now, good sweet Nurse—Oh, Lord, why look'st thou sad?

Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;

4 **I**f good, thou shamest the music of sweet news

By playing it to me with so sour a face.

5 **Nurse.** I am aweary, give me leave° a while.

Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunce° have I had!

**Juliet.** I would thou hadst my bones and I thy news.

Nay, come, I pray thee, speak, good, good Nurse, speak.

**Nurse.** Jesu, what haste? Can you not stay° a while?

Do you not see that I am out of breath?

6 **Juliet.** How art thou out of breath when thou hast breath

To say to me that thou art out of breath?

The excuse that thou dost make in this delay

6. **lowering**: frowning. 7. **nimble-pinioned**: swift-winged. 14. **bandy**: bat, hit (like a tennis ball). 25. **give me leave**: let me alone. 26. **jaunce**: running back and forth. 29. **stay**: wait.



Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.  
Is thy news good, or bad? Answer to that.  
Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance.<sup>o</sup>  
Let me be satisfied, is 't good or bad?

35

**7 Nurse.** Well, you have made a simple<sup>o</sup> choice. You know not how to choose a man. Romeo!  
No, not he, though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg excels all men's; and  
for a hand, and a foot, and a body, though they be not to be talked on, yet they are past  
compare. He is not the flower of courtesy,<sup>o</sup> but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb. Go  
thy ways, wench, serve God. What, have you dined at home?

40

**Juliet.** No, no. But all this did I know before.

What says he of our marriage? What of that?

**8 Nurse.** Lord, how my head aches! What a head have I!  
It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.  
My back o' t' other side—ah, my back, my back!  
Beshrew<sup>o</sup> your heart for sending me about  
To catch my death with jauncing up and down!

45

**Juliet.** I' faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.

50

Sweet, sweet, sweet Nurse, tell me, what says my love?

**Nurse.** Your love says, like an honest gentleman, and a courteous, and a kind, and a hand-  
some, and, I warrant, a virtuous—Where is your mother?

**9 Juliet.** Where is my mother! Why, she is within,  
Where should she be? How oddly thou repliest!  
"Your love says, like an honest gentleman,  
Where is your mother?"

55

**Nurse.** Oh, God's Lady dear!<sup>o</sup>

Are you so hot?<sup>o</sup> Marry, come up, I trow.<sup>o</sup>

Is this the poultice<sup>o</sup> for my aching bones?

Henceforth do your messages yourself.

60

**Juliet.** Here's such a coil!<sup>o</sup> Come, what says Romeo?

**Nurse.** Have you got leave to go to shrift today?

**Juliet.** I have.

**10 Nurse.** Then hie<sup>o</sup> you hence to Friar Laurence' cell,  
There stays a husband to make you a wife.  
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,  
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.  
Hie you to church, I must another way,  
To fetch a ladder by the which your love  
Must climb a bird's nest soon when it is dark.  
Go, I'll to dinner, hie you to the cell.

65

**11 Juliet.** Hie to high fortune! Honest Nurse, farewell.

70

[*Exeunt.*]

36. **stay the circumstance:** wait for details. 38. **simple:** foolish. 41. **flower of courtesy:** perfect gentleman. 48. **Beshrew:** a plague on. 57. **God's Lady dear:** by God's dear Mother (the Virgin Mary). 58. **hot:** impatient. **Marry . . .**  
**trow:** Come, come, you're too impatient, I say. 59. **poultice:** remedy. 61. **coil:** fuss. 64. **hie:** hurry.

7

To tease Juliet, Nurse pretends to find fault with Romeo but actually praises him.

8

Nurse seems to be enjoying her control over Juliet. Fussing also gives her time to see if others are near.

9

*What effect does Nurse's failure to get to the point have on Juliet?* She seems to be at her "wits end," her patience gone.

10

Nurse finally reveals Romeo's message to Juliet.

11

*Irony.* Juliet is exultant, unaware that she is moving closer to death.

## Scene 6

**1**  
Why does Romeo mention death in the midst of wedding preparations? He is risking his life to marry Juliet. Furthermore, Shakespeare is foreshadowing tragic ending of the drama.

**2**  
Does Friar Laurence intend these proverbs as a warning? Responses will vary. Probably he intends only to teach. He offers alternative—"Love moderately." The proverbs do prefigure swift end of the lives of Romeo and Juliet.

**3**  
Simile. Friar Laurence is concerned that love between Romeo and Juliet is too sudden and intense, and may, like gunpowder, explode.

**4**  
Juliet's approach gives Friar Laurence the vision of the young lovers as floating and ethereal, living in unreality.

**5**  
Act Two ends with happiest moment in play as Romeo and Juliet prepare to marry.

## Scene 6

[Friar Laurence's cell. Enter Friar Laurence and Romeo.]

**Friar Laurence.** So smile the Heavens upon this holy act  
That afterhours with sorrow chide us not!

**Romeo.** Amen, amen! But come what sorrow can,  
It cannot countervail° the exchange of joy  
That one short minute gives me in her sight.

**1** Do thou but close our hands with holy words,  
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,  
It is enough I may but call her mine.

**2 Friar Laurence.** These violent delights have violent ends,

**3** And in their triumph die, like fire and powder°  
Which as they kiss consume. The sweetest honey  
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,  
And in the taste confounds the appetite.  
Therefore, love moderately, long love doth so,  
Too swift arrives, as tardy as too slow.

[Enter Juliet.]

Here comes the lady. Oh, so light a foot  
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint.°

A lover may bstride the gossamer°  
That idles in the wanton° summer air,  
**4** And not yet fall, so light is vanity.°

**Juliet.** Good even to my ghostly confessor.

**Friar Laurence.** Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

**Juliet.** As much° to him, else is his thanks too much.

**Romeo.** Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy  
Be heaped like mine, and that thy skill be more  
To blazon° it, then sweeten with thy breath  
This neighbor air, and let rich music's tongue

**5** Unfold the imagined happiness that both  
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

**Juliet.** Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,  
Braggs of his substance, not of ornament.°

They are but beggars that can count their worth,

4. **countervail**: counterbalance, outweigh. 10. **powder**: gunpowder. 17. **flint**: hard stone. 18. **gossamer**: a spider's web. 19. **wanton**: playful. 20. **vanity**: unreality. 23. **As much**: the very same greeting. 26. **blazon** (blá'zən): describe. 30–31. **Conceit . . . ornament**: True understanding (conceit) does not need words.

But my true love is grown to such excess,  
I cannot sum up sum of half my wealth.

**Friar Laurence.** Come, come with me, and we will make short work,  
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone  
Till Holy Church incorporate two in one.

35

[*Exeunt.*]

### Reading Check

1. What danger does Romeo risk in entering Capulet's orchard?
2. Before parting, what decision do the lovers come to?
3. Why has Tybalt sent a letter to the Montagues?
4. What excuse does Juliet use for going to Friar Laurence's cell?
5. How does Romeo plan to enter Juliet's house?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

- 1a. To whom does Romeo refer in Scene 2 when he says, "He jests at scars that never felt a wound"? b. What does this remark mean?
2. Scene 2 takes place in the Capulet orchard late at night after the party. In what two ways does darkness influence what happens in the scene?
3. The balcony scene is famous for its poetry.
  - a. Which lover uses images of light?
  - b. Which one uses images of flowers and birds?
  - c. Find lines in which they express their feelings for each other through these images.
4. In what way does Juliet exhibit more common sense and practicality than Romeo?
- 5a. Why is the Friar surprised at Romeo's confession of a new love? b. Why does he consent to marry Romeo and Juliet?
6. Although Mercutio teases Romeo in Scene 4, he is actually worried for him. Why?
7. Look closely at the Nurse's description of Romeo in Scene 5.
  - a. Is she praising him or finding fault?
  - b. Is she really tired when she enters or is she just teasing Juliet?
8. What concern does the Friar express in Scene 6 about the relationship of Romeo and Juliet?

### READING CHECK

1. If caught, he will be killed (p. 511).
2. They decide to marry (p. 515).
3. To challenge Romeo to a duel (p. 519).
4. She is going to confession (p. 522).
5. By climbing a rope ladder (p. 522).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. To Mercutio, who has been calling to him in a joking fashion in Scene 1. 1b. Romeo thinks Mercutio would not be making fun of him if Mercutio himself had ever been wounded by love.
2. Allows Romeo, a Montague, to enter Capulets' orchard unseen. Darkness also influences Juliet to speak thoughts aloud because she does not see Romeo.
- 3a. Romeo. 3b. Juliet. 3c. Lines 2–9, 15–22, 26–32, 43–47, 107–108, 121–122, 155, 158–160, and 176–183.
4. Worries for Romeo's safety; wonders if Romeo, who has overheard her loving thoughts, will think her too easily won; wants to be sure Romeo's love is honorable, leading to marriage.
- 5a. Romeo is no longer groaning and crying for love of Rosaline. 5b. Hopes that two families will turn from hate to love.
6. Tybalt, an excellent fencer, has challenged Romeo to a duel.
- 7a. In a teasing way, she is praising him. 7b. Probably both. She is somewhat out of breath, having exerted herself. She is also teasing Juliet, making her wait to hear important news.
8. Thinks their love is too sudden and intense and may come to violent end.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to summarize the progress in the love story and tell what they learn about the main figures in this scene. Have them contrast the characters of Romeo and Juliet as revealed in Act Two.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

### Prose and Poetry

After studying examples in the exercise, students should examine the play for other examples of blank verse, heroic couplets, and comic lines in prose. *Romeo and Juliet* uses more rhyme (for example, Act Two, Scene 3) than most other Shakespearean plays.

### Soliloquy, Monologue, and Aside

Students should learn the definitions of soliloquy, monologue, and aside, and should be able to point out examples in each act during the reading of the play.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Some students may need organizational guidelines. You may wish to offer them the following outline:

- I. Introduction
- II. Character sketch of Friar Laurence.
- III. Contrast of Friar Laurence to Montagues and Capulets
- IV. Contrast of Friar Laurence to the Nurse
- V. Conclusion

As a prewriting activity to generate specific details, students might freewrite descriptions of the Friar, the two families, and the Nurse on separate pieces of paper. By comparing these sets of notes, students will discover revealing contrasts of character.

The *Teacher's Manual*, p. 250, discusses specific character traits and gives examples.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Divide students into small groups. Have each group consider the role of one of the minor characters in the play (Paris, Tybalt, Mercutio, Lord or Lady Capulet, Friar Laurence, the Nurse, and so on). Have students list the traits of their character

and discuss how he or she influences the course of the play. Each group should then report to the class.

## Literary Elements

### Dramatic Structure: Conventions

#### Prose and Poetry

At different times in the history of the theater, dramatists have adopted certain **conventions**, or practices that become established and accepted by players and audiences. Shakespeare wrote most of his plays in verse. This was a convention of the Elizabethan theater. Prose is generally reserved for comic passages. Most of the prose passages in *Romeo and Juliet* are spoken by servants and by the Nurse but Mercutio's comic banter is written in prose too. Prose, as a rule, is used for the "lighter" moments of the play.

The most common form of verse in Shakespeare's play is **blank verse**. Blank verse is unrhymed iambic pentameter. In a line that is perfectly regular, an unstressed syllable is always followed by a stressed syllable. This pattern is called iambic.

Būť sŏft! / Wĥat lĥt / thrŏugh yŏn/dĕř  
wĥn/dŏw brĕaks?

The meter is called pentameter because there are five feet in each line, indicated above by slash marks.

A blank verse line is sometimes divided between two speakers:

**Jul.** Take all myself.

**Rom.** I take thee at thy word.

Not all lines are perfectly regular. Without variety in rhythm, the speeches would become monotonous.

A pair of rhymed lines in iambic pentameter is called a **heroic couplet**. Shakespeare often closes a scene with a couplet:

Farewell. Thou canst not teach me to forget.  
I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

(I, 1)

Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,  
His help to crave and my dear hap to tell.

(II, 2)

For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone  
Till Holy Church incorporate two in one.

(II, 6)

#### Soliloquy, Monologue, and Aside

When the Friar stands alone on the stage at the beginning of Act Two, Scene 3, and talks to himself, we understand that he is speaking his thoughts aloud so that we can hear them. This is another convention known as **soliloquy**. A soliloquy is spoken by a character who is alone on stage.

Mercutio's famous speech on Queen Mab in Act One, Scene 4, is a **monologue**. A monologue is a long, virtually uninterrupted speech that is spoken in the presence of other characters.

An **aside** is a short remark usually directed to the audience and not intended to be heard by the other characters on stage. Sometimes, however, an aside is directed at another character. In the first scene of Act One, the servants Gregory and Sampson speak to each other in asides that are not intended to be overheard by Abraham and Balthasar.

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Discussing Contrasts in Character.

Shakespeare's play provides a balanced view of young people and their elders. In the first act Benvolio clearly serves as a contrast to Tybalt, and the Nurse as a contrast to Lady Capulet. In Act Two we meet Friar Laurence, who might be considered a **foil**, or contrast, to the Montagues, the Capulets, and the Nurse. What qualities does he show that are not apparent in the other characters? Write a paper in which you discuss these contrasts.

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to explain the inevitable consequences of the duel between Romeo and Tybalt. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 555 discusses classical allusions and asks students to explain some allusions from *Romeo and Juliet*.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to discuss what they might feel if they suddenly found themselves in great trouble. Would they run or try to work things out? Then tell them that Romeo is faced with that choice.

### Act Three

#### Scene 1

1 [A public place. Enter Mercutio, Benvolio, Page, and Servants.]

**Benvolio.** I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire.

2 The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,  
And if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;  
For now these hot days is the mad blood stirring.

3 **Mercutio.** Thou art like one of those fellows that when he enters the confines of a tavern  
'claps me his sword upon the table and says, "God send me no need of thee!" and by  
the operation of the second cup draws it on the drawer,<sup>7</sup> when indeed there is no  
need.

**Benvolio.** Am I like such a fellow?

**Mercutio.** Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy, and as soon  
moved to be moody,<sup>8</sup> and as soon moody to be moved.

**Benvolio.** And what to?

**Mercutio.** Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill  
4 the other. Thou! Why, thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair  
less, in his beard than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, hav-  
5 ing no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes. What eye but such an eye would  
spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat, and  
yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg for quarreling. Thou hast quarreled  
with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath wakened thy dog that hath lain  
asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a tailor for wearing his new doublet<sup>9</sup> be-  
6 fore Easter? With another for tying his new shoes with old ribbon? And yet thou wilt  
tutor me from quarreling!<sup>10</sup>

7 **Benvolio.** An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee simple<sup>11</sup> of  
my life for an hour and a quarter.

**Mercutio.** The fee simple! Oh, simple!

[Enter Tybalt and others.]

**Benvolio.** By my head, here come the Capulets.

**Mercutio.** By my heel, I care not.

**Tybalt.** Follow me close, for I will speak to them.

Gentlemen, good-den—a word with one of you.

**Mercutio.** And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something—make it a word  
and a blow.

7. **drawer:** waiter. 11. **moody:** angry. 20. **doublet:** short, close-fitting jacket. 22. **tutor me from quarreling:** teach me how to avoid quarreling. 23. **fee simple:** absolute possession.

#### Act Three Scene 1

1 Much of Act Two was devoted to the young lovers. Act Three returns to the feud.

2 Benvolio's opening speech prepares for possibility of a duel.

3 **Simile.** Mercutio implies that Benvolio's suggestion for avoiding quarrels is sure sign that he is about to get into a quarrel.

4 Mercutio tells Benvolio that he is a hotheaded, quarrelsome fellow, something audience and Mercutio know to be untrue. Mercutio makes fun of everyone, including himself.

5 Hazel eyes were thought to be sign of an envious nature.

6 These provocations are trivial, but perhaps no more trivial than the "airy words" Prince Escalus says started Montague-Capulet feud.

7 Benvolio's comment reminds audience that Mercutio is very quick to quarrel. Mention of "fee simple" of life points toward death.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Benvolio and Mercutio encounter Tybalt, who is looking for Romeo. Words are exchanged and tempers flare. Romeo arrives and tries to make peace, but Mercutio and Tybalt fight, and Mercutio is mortally wounded. When Mercutio dies,

8

**Characterization.** Consistent with his character, Mercutio chooses to advance the quarrel for a frivolous rather than a serious reason.

9

Characteristically, Benvolio attempts to be peacemaker.

10

**What is the "reason" Romeo speaks of?** He and Tybalt are now kinsmen by marriage.

11

Audience knows that Romeo and Tybalt are now kinsmen and that Romeo must refuse Tybalt's challenge. None of the characters know this, so Romeo's speeches are misunderstood. Example of dramatic irony.

12

**Epithet.** "Boy" was a considerable insult for a gentleman. Lord Capulet had called Tybalt "boy" during the party.

13

Mercutio suspects no hidden meaning in Romeo's words and assumes them to be an expression of cowardice and surrender. He takes up the gauntlet and challenges Tybalt himself.

14

Mercutio calls Tybalt a "ratcatcher" because Tybalt is name of Prince of Cats in stories of Reynard the fox.

15

**Allusion.** Mercutio refers to the myth that every cat has nine lives.

Romeo is enraged. He and Tybalt fight. Romeo kills Tybalt and flees. Romeo is sentenced to exile.

## PRESENTATION

Most interpretations of the structure of *Romeo and Juliet* state Act III is the climax of the play and that the climactic events are the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt. Ask students to think, perhaps freewriting for a few minutes, about why

**Tybalt.** You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, an you will give me occasion.

**Mercutio.** Could you not take some occasion without giving?

**Tybalt.** Mercutio, thou consort'st<sup>o</sup> with Romeo—

8 **Mercutio.** Consort! What, dost thou make us minstrels?<sup>o</sup> An thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords. Here's my fiddlestick,<sup>o</sup> here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds,<sup>o</sup> consort!

9 **Benvolio.** We talk here in the public haunt of men.

Either withdraw unto some private place,

And reason coldly of your grievances,

Or else depart. Here all eyes gaze on us.

**Mercutio.** Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze.

I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

[Enter Romeo, now kinsman by marriage to the Capulets.]

**Tybalt.** Well, peace be with you sir. Here comes my man.<sup>o</sup>

**Mercutio.** But I'll be hanged, sir, if he wear your livery.<sup>o</sup>

Marry, go before to field,<sup>o</sup> he'll be your follower.

Your worship in that sense may call him man.

**Tybalt.** Romeo, the hate I bear thee can afford

No better term than this—thou art a villain.

10 **Romeo.** Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee

Doth much excuse the appertaining rage<sup>o</sup>

To such a greeting. Villain am I none,

Therefore farewell. I see thou know'st me not.<sup>o</sup>

11 **Tybalt.** Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries

That thou hast done me, therefore turn and draw.

**Romeo.** I do protest I never injured thee,

But love thee better than thou canst devise<sup>o</sup>

Till thou shalt know the reason of my love.

And so, good Capulet—which name I tender<sup>o</sup>

As dearly as mine own—be satisfied.

12 **Mercutio.** Oh, calm, dishonorable, vile submission! — He doesn't know about Juliet either. Romeo is chickens.

Alla stoccata<sup>o</sup> carries it away. [Draws his sword.]

14 **Tybalt.** You ratcatcher, will you walk?

**Tybalt.** What wouldst thou have with me?

15 **Mercutio.** Good King of Cats,<sup>o</sup> nothing but one of your nine lives, that I mean to make

34. **consort'st**: are friendly with. 35. **minstrels**: Mercutio puns on another meaning of consort—a party of musicians. 36. **fiddlestick**: rapier, his sword. 37. **'Zounds**: by God's wounds. 44. **my man**: the man I want. 45. **your livery**: servant's uniform. Mercutio interprets *man* in its other sense of "servant." 46. **field**: dueling place. 51. **appertaining rage**: the anger with which I would otherwise respond. 53. **know'st me not**: Tybalt does not know they are now kinsmen because Romeo has married Juliet. 57. **devise**: guess, imagine. 59. **tender**: regard, care for. 62. **Alla stoccata**: a thrust in fencing. Mercutio uses this term as a name for Tybalt. 65. **King of Cats**: See note 16 on page 519.



this is the **turning point** of the play. Explain to them that before these deaths, the violence of the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets and the passion of Romeo's and Juliet's love for each other were restricted primarily to the realm of words. These actions are essentially

different. In these deaths—and in the deaths of the two lovers in the last act—Shakespeare is pointing out to his readers the destructiveness of violent emotions, whether the emotion is love or hate. The lively action and the **suspense** should keep all students entranced.

For study of the structure of this play, you might now want to present the customary diagram of Shakespearean plot structure on p. 251 of the *Teacher's Manual*. Refer students to **Literary Elements** on p. 554 for additional explanation of related terms that they should

bold withal, and, as you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat° the rest of the eight. Will you pluck your sword out of his pilcher° by the ears? Make haste, lest mine be about your ears ere it be out.

**16 Tybalt.** I am for you. [Drawing]

**Romeo.** Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

**Mercutio.** Come, sir, your passado.°

[They fight.]

**Romeo.** Draw, Benvolio, beat down their weapons.

Gentlemen, for shame, forbear this outrage!

Tybalt, Mercutio, the Prince expressly hath

Forbid this bandying° in Verona streets.

Hold, Tybalt, good Mercutio!

*Romeo steps in to block them and Tybalt kills mercutio*

**17** [Tybalt under Romeo's arm stabs Mercutio and flies with his followers.]

**Mercutio.** I am hurt.

**18** A plague o' both your houses! I am sped.° - feels betrayed by romeo  
Is he gone, and hath nothing?

**Benvolio.** What, art thou hurt?

**Mercutio.** Aye, aye, a scratch, a scratch—marry, 'tis enough.

**19** Where is my page? Go, villain,° fetch a surgeon.

[Exit Page]

**Romeo.** Courage, man, the hurt cannot be much.

**20 Mercutio.** No, 'tis not so deep as a well nor so wide as a church door, but 'tis enough, 'twill serve. Ask for me tomorrow and you shall find me a grave man.° I am peppered,° I warrant, for this world. A plague o' both your houses! 'Zounds, a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! A braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetic!° Why the devil came you between us! I was hurt under your arm.

**Romeo.** I thought all for the best.

**Mercutio.** Help me into some house, Benvolio,

**21** Or I shall faint. A plague o' both your houses! - Romeo & Tybalt.  
They have made worms' meat of me. I have it,  
And soundly too—your houses!

[Exeunt Mercutio and Benvolio.]

**Romeo.** This gentleman, the Prince's near ally,

My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt

In my behalf, my reputation stained

**22** With Tybalt's slander—Tybalt, that an hour

Hath been my kinsman. O sweet Juliet,

66. **dry-beat**: bruise. 67. **pilcher**: scabbard, a case for a sword. 71. **passado**: lunge. 75. **bandying**: quarreling. 77. **sped**: done for. 80. **villain**: term used in addressing a servant. 83. **grave man**: Mercutio's last pun. The two meanings of grave are "serious" and "dead." **peppered**: shot, wounded. 85–86. **book of arithmetic**: textbook on fencing; by exact rules.

**16**

Actions of Mercutio and Tybalt are consistent with their characters. They are both fiery-tempered and ready to accept challenges.

**17**

What is the irony of Romeo's intervention to keep the peace and prevent bloodshed? It leads to the death of his friend Mercutio.

**18**

Mercutio may have been caught up in witty game of trading insults and in excitement of dueling, rather than in any real interest in issues dividing the Montagues and the Capulets. This is suggested by "A plague o' both your houses." In addition, he feels betrayed by Romeo.

**19**

In Elizabethan times, a surgeon had few tools and little training. More often than not, the surgeon was the barber.

**20**

**Characterization.** Even as Mercutio lies mortally wounded, his wit does not abandon him.

**21**

Mercutio repeats his curse on the houses of Capulet and Montague. In Shakespeare's plays, curses are often prophetic.

**22**

Romeo grieves for his friend. Only one hour after wedding, the union seems doomed.

understand: **exposition**, **rising action**, **turning point** or **crisis**, **climax**, **falling action**, and **resolution**.

The first two study questions (p. 554) will help students understand the characters of the young men and the inevitability of the duels between

Tybalt and Mercutio and between Romeo and Tybalt. Ask students why Romeo's killing of Tybalt is the **turning point** of the drama. This event decides the nature of the **falling action** and the tragic conclusion.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

Edwin Austin Abbey (1852–1941) was a multit talented artist who gained great fame as an illustrator of literary works. Hired by Harper & Brothers, publishers of books and of *Harper's Magazine*, Abbey went to England to get illustrative material for an 1882 book on the English poet Herrick—a book that secured Abbey's fame.

In 1886, Abbey began illustrating Shakespeare's plays, a project he continued for many years.

In 1902, he was chosen by Edward VII to do his coronation pictures. Later, Abbey was knighted. He is still respected as creator of some of the finest illustrations for literary works.

Abbey lived mostly in England, but some of his art may be seen in a frieze for the Boston Public Library and in a mural for the Pennsylvania Capitol.

### Ideas for Writing

Have students write essays in which they discuss how Abbey conveys the mood of this scene through his use of colors. Note, for instance, the white garments of the priests; Mercutio's dark blue shirt, his crimson stockings; Tybalt's crimson cape and hat. Have them suggest reasons why the religious painting above the priests is blurred and indistinct.



Yale Museum of Art

*Death of Mercutio* (1902) by Edwin Austin Abbey. Watercolor.

Thy beauty hath made me effeminate,<sup>97</sup>  
And in my temper softened valor's steel!

[Reenter Benvolio.]

**Benvolio.** O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead!  
That gallant spirit hath aspired<sup>98</sup> the clouds,  
Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

100

**Romeo.** This day's black fate on more days doth depend,<sup>99</sup>  
This but begins the woe others must end.

[Reenter Tybalt.]

**Benvolio.** Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

**Romeo.** Alive, in triumph! And Mercutio slain!

105

Away to Heaven, respective lenity,<sup>100</sup>  
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct<sup>101</sup> now!  
Now, Tybalt, take the "villain" back again  
That late thou gavest me; for Mercutio's soul  
Is but a little way above our heads,  
Staying for thine to keep him company.  
Either thou, or I, or both, must go with him.

**Tybalt.** Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him here,  
Shalt with him hence.

**Romeo.** This shall determine that.

[They fight; Tybalt falls dead.]

**Benvolio.** Romeo, away, be gone!

115

The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain.

Stand not amazed. The Prince will doom thee death

If thou art taken. Hence, be gone, away!

**Romeo.** Oh, I am fortune's fool!<sup>102</sup>

**Benvolio.** Why dost thou stay!

[Exit Romeo.]

[Enter Citizens.]

**First Citizen.** Which way ran he that killed Mercutio?

120

Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

**Benvolio.** There lies that Tybalt.

97. **effeminate**: womanly. 100. **aspired**: soared to. 102. **on more days doth depend**: will be followed by more fatal days. 106. **respective lenity**: considerate mercy (which Romeo has shown to Tybalt). 107. **conduct**: guide. 119. **fortune's fool**: fooled by fortune.

23

Romeo knows that only bad will come of what has happened. **End rhymes** make Romeo's response seem especially formal and ominous.

24

Even though Tybalt is now his kinsman, a furious Romeo is impelled to fight Tybalt in order to avenge death of Mercutio.

25

The deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt are the **turning point** of the play.

26

Benvolio's lines suggest Romeo is standing, shocked and immobile, over the dead body of Tybalt. Benvolio urges Romeo to flee because his life is now in danger.

27

Reminder of Prince's proclamation in Act One.

28

**Allusion.** Romeo feels that he has no control over his life. Each person was thought to occupy a place on the wheel of Dame Fortune. As she turned the wheel, each person's fortunes improved or worsened.

29

Benvolio urges Romeo to flee, for he fears Prince will show Romeo no mercy and Capulets will seek vengeance.



**30**  
Capulets crowd around the body of Tybalt while Montagues keep their distance.

**31**  
Lady Capulet wants Prince to keep his promise to make those who violate peace forfeit their lives.

**32**  
**Irony.** Lady Capulet does not know that her daughter is now a Montague.

**33**  
Benvolio, although a Montague, gives relatively impartial report of fight.

**34**  
Audience is reminded of Romeo's essential innocence; he killed Tybalt in a fair fight and only after extreme provocation.

**35**  
**Is Benvolio's report true?** He shows his sympathies by not mentioning that Mercutio forced quarrel but, in other respects, reports the truth.

**36**  
This is Benvolio's last speech in the play; after this scene, he disappears.

**First Citizen.** Up, sir, go with me.  
I charge thee in the Prince's name, obey.

**30** [Enter Prince, attended; Montague, Capulet, their Wives, and others.]

**Prince.** Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

**Benvolio.** O noble Prince, I can discover<sup>o</sup> all  
The unlucky manage<sup>o</sup> of this fatal brawl.  
There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,  
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

**Lady Capulet.** Tybalt, my cousin! Oh, my brother's child!

O Prince! O Cousin! Husband! Oh, the blood is spilt,

**31** Of my dear kinsman! Prince, as thou art true,

**32** For blood of ours shed blood of Montague.

O Cousin, Cousin!

**Prince.** Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

**33 Benvolio.** Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did slay—

**34** Romeo that spoke him fair, bade him bethink

How nice<sup>o</sup> the quarrel was, and urged withal

Your high displeasure. All this uttered

With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bowed,

Could not take truce with the unruly spleen<sup>o</sup>

Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts

With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast,

Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,

And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats

Cold death aside and with the other sends

It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity

Retorts it. Romeo, he cries aloud,

"Hold, friends! Friends, part!" and, swifter than his tongue,

His agile arm beats down their fatal points,

And 'twixt them rushes. Underneath whose arm

An envious<sup>o</sup> thrust from Tybalt hit the life

Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled,

But by and by comes back to Romeo,

Who had but newly entertained revenge,

And to 't they go like lightning. For ere I

Could draw to part them was stout Tybalt slain,

**35** And as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly.

**36** This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

125. **discover:** reveal. 126. **manage:** circumstances. 137. **nice:** trifling, trivial. 140. **spleen:** fiery temper. 151. **envious:** hateful.

*what a Montague now?*  
*June!*

*why does he hide Mercutio's starting body?*  
*fell on Romeo*

**Lady Capulet.** He is a kinsman to the Montague,

Affection makes him false, he speaks not true.

37 Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,

And all those twenty could but kill one life.

I beg for justice, which thou, Prince, must give.

Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

**Prince.** Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio.

Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

38 **Montague.** [Pleading] Not Romeo, Prince, he was Mercutio's friend.

His fault concludes but what the law should end,

The life of Tybalt.

**Prince.** [His anger roused] And for that offense

39 Immediately we do exile him hence.

I have an interest<sup>o</sup> in your hate's proceeding,

My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding.

But I'll amerce<sup>o</sup> you with so strong a fine

That you shall all repent the loss of mine.

I will be deaf to pleading and excuses,

Nor tears nor prayers shall purchase out<sup>o</sup> abuses.

Therefore use none. Let Romeo hence in haste,

40 Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.

Bear hence this body, and attend our will.<sup>o</sup>

41 Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.

[Exeunt.]

## Scene 2

[Capulet's orchard. Enter Juliet.]

1 **Juliet.** Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,

Toward Phoebus<sup>o</sup> lodging. Such a wagoner

And Phaëton<sup>o</sup> would whip you to the west,

And bring in cloudy night immediately.

2 Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,

That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo

Leap to these arms, untalked of and unseen.

Lovers can see to do their amorous rites

By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,

It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,

171. **interest:** concern. Mercutio was the Prince's kinsman. 173. **amerce:** punish. 176. **purchase out:** pay for. 179. **attend our will:** come to receive my judgment.

2. **Phoebus** (fē'bas): the sun god, Phoebus Apollo, who according to mythology was drawn across the sky in his chariot every day. 3. **Phaëton** (fā'a-tən): the son of Phoebus. He tried to drive his father's chariot, but was unable to control the horses.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 72*

← why doesn't she believe Benvolio?

← Mercutio is his relative.

← if he stays, he'll die.

← if you give mercy to a killer, they'll kill again?

← She doesn't know the fight of exile yet.

← waiting for Romeo

37

Lady Capulet, who does not believe Benvolio, makes wild charge suggesting that twenty men attacked Tybalt.

38

Montague claims that Romeo should not be punished because his only crime was that of killing Tybalt, whose life was forfeit because he had killed Mercutio.

39

Going against his own decree, Prince shows some mercy and announces that Romeo will be exiled. Being forced to live away from one's city was considered a harsh punishment.

40

**Plot.** If Romeo is caught in Verona, he will be executed.

41

The Prince blames himself, for he feels he has been too lenient in past.

## Scene 2

1

**Allusion.** Juliet alludes to the mythological belief that the sun was a golden chariot to show that she wants day to pass as quickly as possible.

2

In this **soliloquy**, Juliet is eager for the coming of night and the arrival of Romeo. She does not know that Romeo has killed Tybalt, has fled, and is exiled.

3

**Personification.** Juliet envisions night as a dark-suited matron who will teach her how to succeed at love.

4

An "unmanned" hawk is untrained, wild; "bating" refers to fluttering. A "hood" is placed over the hawk's head to keep it quiet, make it tame. Juliet is asking night to keep her from blushing.

5

**Imagery.** Describing her unconsummated marriage as a real estate deal may seem unromantic, but Juliet's girlish impatience gives it charm.

6

Nurse does bring news, but not news that Juliet wants. As Juliet anticipates news of Romeo, audience sympathizes with her, knowing how cruelly she is to be disappointed.

7

**Welladay:** an expression of dismay and sorrow. Nurse too upset to convey news clearly. Juliet thinks Nurse means Romeo is dead.

8

**Of whom is the Nurse speaking? What effect does her message have on Juliet?** Nurse is speaking of Tybalt. Her lack of clarity dreadfully misleads Juliet.

9

Eager anticipation of Romeo's arrival has been transformed into acute anguish.

3

Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,  
And learn me how to lose a winning match  
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.

4

Hood my unmanned blood bating in my cheeks  
With thy black mantle, till strange love grown bold  
Think true love acted simple modesty.

Come, night, come, Romeo, come, thou day in night,  
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night  
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.

Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-browed night,  
Give me my Romeo; and when he shall die,  
Take him and cut him out in little stars,  
And he will make the face of heaven so fine  
That all the world will be in love with night,  
And pay no worship to the garish<sup>o</sup> sun.

5

Oh, I have bought the mansion of a love,  
But not possessed it, and though I am sold,  
Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day

As is the night before some festival  
To an impatient child that hath new robes

And may not wear them. Oh, here comes my nurse,

6

And she brings news, and every tongue that speaks  
But Romeo's name speaks heavenly eloquence.

[Enter Nurse, with ladder of cords.]

Now, Nurse, what news? What hast thou there? The cords  
That Romeo bid thee fetch?

**Nurse.** Aye, aye, the cords. [Throws them down.]

**Juliet.** Aye me! What news? Why dost thou wring thy hands?

**7 Nurse.** Ah, welladay! He's dead, he's dead, he's dead.  
We are undone, lady, we are undone.

**8 Alack the day! He's gone, he's killed, he's dead.**

**Juliet.** Can Heaven be so envious?

**Nurse.** Romeo can,  
Though Heaven cannot, O Romeo, Romeo!  
Who ever would have thought it? Romeo!

**Juliet.** What devil art thou that dost torment me thus?

**9 This torture should be roared in dismal Hell.  
Hath Romeo slain himself? Say thou but "I,"  
And that bare vowel "I" shall poison more**

25. **garish:** gaudy. 46. **"I":** Juliet puns on "aye" and "I."

15

20

25

30

35

40

45



- 10 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice.<sup>50</sup>  
 11 I am not I, if there be such an I,  
 Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer "I."  
 If he be slain, say "I," or if not, no.  
 Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.
- 12 **Nurse.** I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes—  
 God save the mark!—here on his manly breast.  
 A piteous corse,<sup>51</sup> a bloody piteous corse,  
 Pale, pale as ashes, all bedaubed in blood,  
 13 All in gore blood. I swooned<sup>52</sup> at the sight.

**Juliet.** Oh, break, my heart! Poor bankrupt, break at once!  
 To prison, eyes, ne'er look on liberty!  
 Vile earth<sup>53</sup> to earth resign, end motion here,  
 And thou and Romeo press one heavy bier!

**Nurse.** O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had!  
 O courteous Tybalt! Honest gentleman!  
 That ever I should live to see thee dead!

**Juliet.** What storm is this that blows so contrary?  
 Is Romeo slaughtered, and is Tybalt dead?  
 My dear-loved cousin, and my dearer lord?  
 Then, dreadful trumpet,<sup>54</sup> sound the general doom!  
 For who is living if those two are gone?

**Nurse.** Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished—  
 Romeo that killed him, he is banished.

**Juliet.** Oh, God! Did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood?

**Nurse.** It did, it did. Alas the day, it did!

- 14 **Juliet.** Oh, serpent heart, hid with a flowering face!  
 Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?  
 15 Beautiful tyrant! Fiend angelical!  
 Dove-feathered raven! Wolvish-ravining lamb!<sup>55</sup>  
 Despised substance of divinest show!  
 Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,  
 A damnèd saint, an honorable villain!  
 O Nature, what hadst thou to do in Hell  
 When thou didst bower<sup>56</sup> the spirit of a fiend  
 In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?  
 Was ever book containing such vile matter  
 16 So fairly bound? Oh, that deceit should dwell  
 In such a gorgeous palace!

48. **cockatrice:** a fabulous serpent that could kill with a glance. 55. **corse:** corpse. 57. **swooned:** swooned, fainted.  
 60. **Vile earth:** Juliet refers to herself. 68. **dreadful trumpet:** the trumpet that is supposed to announce the end of the world. 74–77. **Oh . . . lamb:** This series of images combining opposite or contradictory ideas is typical in early Elizabethan poetry. 82. **bower:** embower.

10

Juliet says that an utterance of "aye," verifying that Romeo is dead, would be more poisonous than fatal glance of the cockatrice.

11

**Pun.** For Juliet to express her torment in puns may seem inappropriate. However, Elizabethan audiences delighted in wordplay, even in moments of high tragedy.

12

By not naming the corpse, Nurse increases Juliet's fears about Romeo. Nurse also begins her sentence with an "I," ignoring Juliet's request.

13

Nurse, wrapped up in her grief over Tybalt, again delays giving Juliet news of Romeo. Unlike previous occasion, effect is not comic; Juliet assumes the worst.

14

**What is Juliet's first reaction to the news that Romeo has killed Tybalt?** Disillusionment that a man who seems perfect could do such a deed.

15

**Figurative language.** Juliet's words reflect her torn allegiance to Romeo and to her own family. Her speech contains numerous contrasts (**oxymorons**), as in "Fiend angelical," "Dove-feathered raven," and "Wolvish-ravining lamb."

16

Juliet has concluded that Romeo is at fault. She wonders how such a murderous nature could dwell inside someone so fair.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The theme of appearance-versus-reality, or seeming-and-being, is one of the great themes in Shakespeare's works. Juliet is stunned to discover that Romeo has killed Tybalt. Regardless of her anguish, though, Juliet will be loyal to Romeo.

### Ideas for Writing

Have students write paragraphs in which they compare the image of Juliet's nurse in this movie scene to the one on p. 523. Ask them to explain how the apparent difference in her age changes the way they feel about her. Does she seem more wise, loving, compassionate or sensitive in one photo or the other? How do the actresses' expressions and attitudes convey the substance and meaning of these two scenes.



A scene from the 1985 BBC-TV production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

17

Nurse indulges in conventional criticism of men; then, just as quickly, she mourns her dead husband.

18

After hearing Nurse attack Romeo, Juliet immediately defends him.

19

Juliet will be loyal to her husband above all else.

17 Nurse.

There's no trust,

No faith, no honesty in men—all perjured,  
All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers.<sup>88</sup>

Ah, where's my man? Give me some aqua vitae.<sup>89</sup>

These griefs, these woes, these sorrows, make me old.  
Shame come to Romeo!

18 Juliet.

Blistered be thy tongue

For such a wish! He was not born to shame.

Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit,  
For 'tis a throne where honor may be crowned  
Sole monarch of the universal earth.

Oh, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse. Will you speak well of him that killed your cousin?

19 Juliet. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?

Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name

88. **dissemblers**: pretenders, hypocrites. 89. **aqua vitae** (vī'tē): spirits.

90

95

say bad things but when we're close she defends him

loyal 1st to husband Romeo!

\* Nurse turns on Romeo, but feels bad for Juliet.

- When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?  
But wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?  
20 That villain cousin would have killed my husband. *she realizes that Tybalt would have killed Romeo* 100  
Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring,  
Your tributary drops belong to woe  
Which you mistaking offer up to joy. 105  
21 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain,  
And Tybalt's dead, that would have slain my husband. *★*  
All this is comfort, wherefore weep I, then?  
Some word there was, worse than Tybalt's death,  
That murdered me. I would forget it fain.<sup>o</sup> 110  
But, oh, it presses to my memory  
22 Like damnèd guilty deeds to sinners' minds.  
"Tybalt is dead, and Romeo banishèd,"  
That "banishèd," that one word "banishèd," *- dwells on Romeo banished* 115  
23 Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death  
Was woe enough if it had ended there.  
Or, if sour woe delights in fellowship,  
And needly<sup>o</sup> will be ranked with other griefs,  
Why followed not, when she said "Tybalt's dead,"  
Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both, 120  
Which modern<sup>o</sup> lamentation might have moved?  
24 But with a rearward following Tybalt's death,  
"Romeo is banishèd." To speak that word  
Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet, *- her whole life is killed*  
All slain, all dead. "Romeo is banishèd." 125  
There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,  
25 In that word's death; no words can that woe sound.  
Where is my father, and my mother, Nurse?  
Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse.  
Will you go to them? I will bring you thither. 130  
26 Juliet. Wash they his wounds with tears. Mine shall be spent, *- no longer feels bad @ Tybalt*  
When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.  
Take up those cords. Poor ropes, you are beguiled,  
Both you and I, for Romeo is exiled.  
He made you for a highway to my bed,  
But I, a maid, die maiden-widowèd. 135  
Come, cords, come Nurse, I'll to my wedding bed,  
And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead! *she says her virginity will be taken by death, and not Romeo*  
Nurse. Hie to your chamber. I'll find Romeo  
27 To comfort you. I wot<sup>o</sup> well where he is. *- nurse will bring Romeo* 140

20

Juliet sees Tybalt from new perspective: not as beloved kinsman but as would-be murderer of her husband.

21

**Parallelism.** Repetition of ideas in similar sentence structure emphasizes Juliet's understanding and acceptance of Tybalt's death.

22

**Simile.** Juliet compares her inability to forget the word *banished* to sinner's inability to forget sins.

23

Word *banished* causes Juliet more grief than would death of "ten thousand Tybalts."

24

**Rearward following:** Coming or following after.

25

**What does "no words can that woe sound" mean?** No words can measure the depth of Juliet's sorrow.

26

Any sympathy Juliet felt for Tybalt has been exhausted.

27

Nurse promises to bring Romeo to Juliet.

110. **fain:** willingly. 118. **needly:** necessarily. 121. **modern:** ordinary. 140. **wot:** know.



### Scene 3

1

Having seen Juliet's reaction to the unfortunate turn of events, audience now sees Romeo's. He enters, unaware that he has been banished.

2

Romeo is said to be "wedded to calamity"—that only misfortune can come from love for Juliet.

3

Allusion. Romeo refers to the Prince's decree as "Doomsday," the end of the world: this is what banishment feels like for him.

4

Why have Romeo and Juliet reacted so violently to the word "banished"? They do not want to live apart.

5

In contrast to Romeo's horror at being banished, Friar Laurence sees exile as tolerable. His view encompasses the whole world. Both Romeo and Juliet think the other is the whole world.

6

Using an incorrect assumption, Romeo feels that being banished is the same as being dead.

7

Figurative language. Romeo compares exile to death by beheading. By his reference to a "golden ax," he says death is death, no matter what it is called.

Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night.  
I'll to him—he is hid at Laurence's cell.

**Juliet.** Oh, find him! Give this ring to my true knight,  
And bid him come to take his last farewell.

[Exeunt.]

### Scene 3

[Friar Laurence's cell. Enter Friar Laurence.]

- 1 **Friar Laurence.** Romeo, come forth, come forth, thou fearful<sup>o</sup> man.  
Affliction is enamored of thy parts,<sup>o</sup>  
2 And thou art wedded to calamity.

[Enter Romeo.]

**Romeo.** Father, what is the Prince's doom?<sup>o</sup>  
What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand  
That I yet know not?

**Friar Laurence.** Too familiar  
Is my dear son with such sour company.  
I bring thee tidings of the Prince's doom.

- 3 **Romeo.** What less than Doomsday is the Prince's doom?  
**Friar Laurence.** A gentler judgment vanished<sup>o</sup> from his lips,  
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

- 4 **Romeo.** Ha, banishment! Be merciful, say "death,"  
For exile hath more terror in his look,  
Much more, than death. Do not say "banishment."

**Friar Laurence.** Hence from Verona art thou banished.

- 5 Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.  
6 **Romeo.** There is no world without<sup>o</sup> Verona walls,  
But Purgatory, torture, Hell itself.

- Hence banished is banished from the world.  
And world's exile is death. Then "banished,"  
7 Is death misnamed. Calling death "banished"  
Thou cut'st my head off with a golden ax,  
And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.

**Friar Laurence.** Oh, deadly sin! Oh, rude unthankfulness!

Thy fault our law calls death, but the kind Prince,  
Taking thy part, hath rushed<sup>o</sup> aside the law,

→ Romeo doesn't know  
he's been banished  
yet.

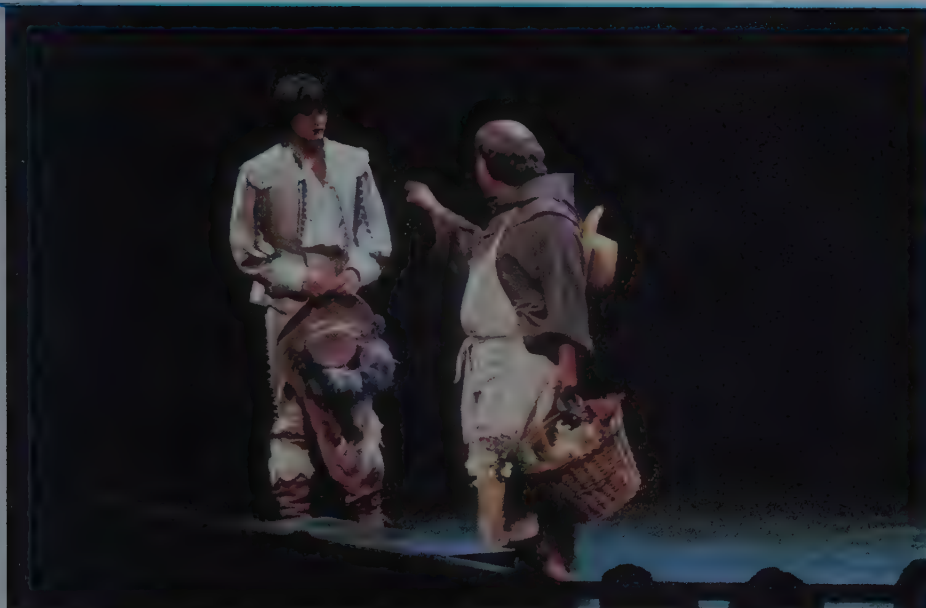
— Romeo would rather die than  
leave Juliet.

— Friar says Romeo has the whole  
rest of the world, but  
Juliet is Romeo's  
world.

— Gold is nice, but  
death is death

1. **fearful:** full of fear. 2. **Affliction . . . parts:** Misfortune has fallen in love with your good qualities (and so follows wherever you go). 4. **doom:** sentence. 10. **vanished:** escaped. 17. **without:** outside. 26. **rushed:** brushed.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 73*



A scene from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's 1982 production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

And turned that black word "death" to "banishment."  
This is dear<sup>o</sup> mercy, and thou seest it not.

- 8 Romeo.** 'Tis torture, and not mercy. Heaven is here,  
Where Juliet lives, and every cat and dog  
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,  
Live here in Heaven and may look on her,  
But Romeo may not. More validity,  
**9** More honorable state, more courtship, lives  
**10** In carrion flies than Romeo. They may seize  
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,  
And steal immortal blessing from her lips,  
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,  
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin.  
But Romeo may not, he is banishèd.  
This may flies do, but I from this must fly.  
They are free men, but I am banishèd.  
And say'st thou yet that exile is not death?  
**11** Hadst thou no poison mixed, no sharp-ground knife,  
No sudden means of death, though ne'er so mean.  
But "banishèd" to kill me?—"Banishèd"?  
O Friar, the damnèd use that word in Hell,

28. dear: precious.

- Friar thinks Romeo should be thankful for life.

- even flies can land on Juliet but Romeo cannot.

- wants to die.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Romeo's extreme reactions make him a danger to himself at this point in the action. Even Friar Laurence's patience and his sensible advice do not avail much with Romeo.

### Ideas for Writing

The fact that the Friar is pointing his finger at Romeo makes it seem as if the Friar is a parent lecturing his son. Ask students to write essays in which they analyze how Romeo and the Friar represent two different viewpoints, the viewpoints of youth and age. Ask them to include what they think are the different concerns of the two attitudes. What, for instance, do youthful people want that older people do not want?

### 8

Throughout the play, Romeo has been characterized as extreme in his reactions. Reaction to banishment is typically extreme.

### 9

Although audience might wonder why Juliet could not go into exile with Romeo, this is not a course of action that Shakespeare allows audience to dwell on.

### 10

**Imagery.** Romeo compares himself to the most repugnant form of life: flies that feed on carrion. Amazingly, he thinks them more fortunate.

### 11

**Foreshadowing.** Romeo's mention of poison hints of his eventual fate.

12

Philosophy can help one deal with and conquer difficulty.

13

**Characterization.** Romeo rudely rejects Friar Laurence's suggestions. A young man who lives for the moment, he does not realize that banishment need not last forever.

14

Line 64 echoes Romeo's earlier line "He jests at scars that never felt a wound." Romeo is convinced that he is unique in his passionate feelings.

15

Romeo feels that the Friar is unable to give good advice on situation because he cannot fully understand what Romeo is going through.

16

Romeo's despair is as deep as Juliet's; like her, he can think only of death as a way out.

17

Romeo knows that he might be caught but refuses to hide himself, unless his groans, like clouds, will hide him.

18

Afraid that the one at door is seeking Romeo, Friar stalls for time as he tries to get Romeo to hide in the study. He is losing patience with Romeo.

Howling attends it. How hast thou the heart,  
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,  
A sin-absolver, and my friend professed,  
To mangle me with that word "banishèd"?

**Friar Laurence.** Thou fond<sup>o</sup> madman, hear me but speak a word.

**Romeo.** Oh, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

**Friar Laurence.** I'll give thee armor to keep off that word,

12 Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,  
To comfort thee, though thou art banishèd.

13 **Romeo.** Yet "banishèd"? Hang up philosophy!

Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,  
Displant<sup>o</sup> a town, reverse a Prince's doom,  
It helps not, it prevails not. Talk no more.

**Friar Laurence.** Oh, then I see that madmen have no ears.

**Romeo.** How should they when that wise men have no eyes?

**Friar Laurence.** Let me dispute<sup>o</sup> with thee of thy estate.<sup>o</sup>

14 **Romeo.** Thou canst not speak of that thou dost not feel.

15 Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,

An hour but married, Tybalt murderèd,

Doting like me, and like me banishèd,

Then mightst thou speak, then mightst thou tear thy hair

And fall upon the ground, as I do now,

16 Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

[As he falls to the ground, someone knocks within.]

**Friar Laurence.** Arise, one knocks. Good Romeo, hide thyself.

17 **Romeo.** Not I, unless the breath of heartsick groans

Mistlike enfold me from the search of eyes. [Knocking.]

18 **Friar Laurence.** Hark how they knock! Who's there? Romeo, arise,

Thou wilt be taken.—Stay while!—Stand up, [Knocking.]

Run to my study.—By and by!<sup>o</sup>—God's will,

What simpleness is this!—I come, I come! [Knocking.]

Who knocks so hard? Whence come you? What's your will?

**Nurse.** [Within] Let me come in, and you shall know my errand.

I come from Lady Juliet.

**Friar Laurence.** Welcome, then.

[Enter Nurse.]

**Nurse.** O holy Friar, oh, tell me, holy Friar

Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

52. **fond:** foolish. 59. **Displant:** uproot. 63. **dispute:** discuss. **estate:** circumstances. 76. **By and by:** Wait a moment.



**Friar Laurence.** There on the ground, with his own tears made drunk.

**Nurse.** Oh, he is even in my mistress' case,  
Just in her case!

**19 Friar Laurence.** Oh, woeful sympathy!  
Piteous predicament!

**20 Nurse.** Even so lies she,  
Blubbing and weeping, weeping and blubbing

**21** Stand up, stand up, stand, an you be a man.  
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand.  
Why should you fall into so deep an O?°

**Romeo.** Nurse!

**22 Nurse.** Ah sir, ah sir! Well, death's the end of all.

**Romeo.** Spakest thou of Juliet? How is it with her?  
Doth she not think me an old° murderer,  
Now I have stained the childhood of our joy  
With blood removed but little from her own?  
Where is she? And how doth she? And what says  
**23** My concealed lady° to our canceled love?

**Nurse.** Oh, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps,  
And now falls on her bed, and then starts up  
And Tybalt calls, and then on Romeo cries,  
And then down falls again.

**24 Romeo.** As if that name,  
Shot from the deadly level° of a gun,  
Did murder her, as that name's cursèd hand  
Murdered her kinsman. Oh, tell me, Friar, tell me,  
In what vile part of this anatomy°  
Doth my name lodge? Tell me, that I may sack°  
The hateful mansion. [Drawing his dagger.]

**25 Friar Laurence.** Hold thy desperate hand.  
Art thou a man? Thy form cries out thou art.  
Thy tears are womanish, thy wild acts denote  
The unreasonable fury of a beast.  
Unseemly woman in a seeming man!  
Or ill-beseeming beast in seeming both!°  
Thou hast amazed me. By my holy order,  
I thought thy disposition better tempered.°  
Hast thou slain Tybalt? Wilt thou slay thyself?

**26** And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,  
By doing damndèd hate upon thyself?  
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the Heaven and earth?

90. O: cry of grief. 94. old: experienced. 98. concealed lady: secret bride. 103. level: aim. 106. anatomy: body.  
107. sack: destroy. 113. Or . . . both: a shameful beast for you are neither man nor woman. 115. tempered: mixed.

85

90

95

100

105

110

115

**19**

Friar speaks of the "sympathy" (affinity of hearts) that makes Romeo and Juliet respond similarly to their situation.

**20**

Nurse and Friar perform similar roles—Nurse is Juliet's confidant and Friar is Romeo's confidant—yet they are a strongly contrasting pair of characters.

**21**

Nurse thinks Romeo is not acting like a man. She chides him and encourages him to be brave for Juliet's sake.

**22**

Romeo might be speaking of death; he is unlikely to take much comfort from Nurse's line.

**23**

Pun. Romeo puns bitterly on concealed and canceled.

**24**

Figurative language. Romeo describes his name as both a bullet and a murdering hand. Lamenting he is a Montague, Romeo threatens suicide.

**25**

How does Friar Laurence begin talking Romeo out of suicide? Appeals to Romeo's sense of manhood and also to his logic as a rational being.

**26**

Friar reminds Romeo of effect his death would have on Juliet.

27

Suicide was considered an unforgivable sin. By killing himself, Romeo would lose his life, Heaven and earth.

28

Friar presents arguments against suicide. Compares Romeo to miser unwilling to use his talents, to a wax figure that has lost its shape. Suggests passion has burned out Romeo's reason.

29

Friar urges Romeo to look at bright side: Juliet is alive; he has avoided being killed by Tybalt; his execution has been commuted to banishment.

30

**Parallelism.** Friar uses repetition of "There art thou happy" to emphasize the point he is making, that Romeo should be happy.

31

Friar concludes his lesson with a plan for Romeo to follow. Romeo is to go to Juliet, comfort her, and then flee to Mantua until everything can be straightened out for his return.

32

Mantua (or Mantova, as it is known in Italy) is about twenty-five miles, or forty kilometers, from Verona, a day's ride.

33

Friar Laurence is an optimist, sure that Romeo's problems can be resolved.

27 Since birth and Heaven and earth all three do meet  
In thee at once, which thou at once wouldst lose.

28 Fie, fie, thou shamest thy shape, thy love, thy wit,  
Which, like a usurer,<sup>o</sup> abound'st in all,  
And usest none in that true use indeed  
Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.

Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,  
Digressing from the valor of a man;  
Thy dear love sworn, but hollow perjury,  
Killing that love which thou hast vowed to cherish;  
Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,  
Misshapen in the conduct of them both,  
Like powder in a skill-less soldier's flask,  
Is set afire by thine own ignorance,  
And thou dismembered with thine own defense.<sup>o</sup>

29 What, rouse thee, man! Thy Juliet is alive,  
For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead.

30 There art thou happy. Tybalt would kill thee,  
But thou slew'st Tybalt. There art thou happy too.  
The law, that threatened death, becomes thy friend  
And turns it to exile. There art thou happy.

A pack of blessings lights upon thy back,  
Happiness courts thee in her best array;  
But, like a misbehaved and sullen wench,  
Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love.  
Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.

31 Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,  
Ascend her chamber—hence and comfort her.  
But look thou stay not till the watch be set,<sup>o</sup>

32 For then thou canst not pass to Mantua,  
Where thou shalt live till we can find a time  
To blaze<sup>o</sup> your marriage, reconcile your friends,  
Beg pardon of the Prince, and call thee back  
With twenty hundred thousand times more joy

33 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.  
Go before, Nurse. Commend me to thy lady,  
And bid her hasten all the house to bed,  
Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto.  
Romeo is coming.

**Nurse.** Oh Lord, I could have stayed here all the night

120

125

130

135

140

145

150

155

*failing Rome out of  
suicide.*

*Romeo should be happy  
① - ref alive  
② Juliet alive  
③ ref not going to  
be executed.*

*TELL Romeo to go  
see Juliet, then go  
to Mantua and wait  
Friar will iron things  
out & make marriage  
public and help Romeo*

123. **usurer:** miser. 134. **dismembered . . . defense:** blown to pieces by your own weapon. 148. **watch be set:** watchmen go on duty at the gates. 151. **blaze:** make public.

To hear good counsel. Oh, what learning is!  
My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come. 160

**Romeo.** Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

**Nurse.** Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir.  
Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late. — Happy now

34 **Romeo.** How well my comfort is revived by this! — Friar promises to keep Romeo informed

**Friar Laurence.** Go hence, good night, and here stands all your state.<sup>o</sup> [Exit.] 165  
Either be gone before the watch be set,  
Or by the break of day disguised from hence.

35 **Sojourn**<sup>o</sup> in Mantua. I'll find out your man,  
And he shall signify from time to time 170  
Every good hap<sup>o</sup> to you that chances here.

36 Give me thy hand, 'tis late. Farewell, good night.

**Romeo.** But that a joy past joy calls out to me,  
It were a grief so brief to part with thee.  
Farewell. [Exeunt.] 175

#### Scene 4

[A room in Capulet's house.]

**Capulet.** Things have fall'n out, sir, so unluckily,  
That we have had no time to move<sup>o</sup> our daughter.  
Look you, she loved her kinsman Tybalt dearly,  
And so did I. Well, we were born to die.  
'Tis very late, she'll not come down tonight.  
I promise you, but for your company 5  
I would have been abed an hour ago. — It's late at night.

**Paris.** These times of woe afford no time to woo.  
Madam, good night. Commend me to your daughter. — Juliet will decide if she'll marry Paris or not.

2 **Lady Capulet.** I will, and know her mind early tomorrow;  
Tonight she's mewed up to her heaviness.<sup>o</sup> — I think she's sorry for Tybalt, but it's really Romeo.

3 **Capulet.** Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender<sup>o</sup>  
Of my child's love. I think she will be ruled  
In all respects by me—nay, more, I doubt it not.  
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed,  
Acquaint her here of my son<sup>o</sup> Paris' love,  
And bid her, mark you me, on Wednesday next—  
But, soft! what day is this? — Decides for Juliet 15

166. **here . . . state:** on this depends all your good fortune. 169. **Sojourn:** remain. 171. **hap:** happening.  
2. **move:** make your proposal to. 11. **mewed . . . heaviness:** shut up in seclusion with her sorrow. 12. **desperate tender:** bold offer. 16. **son:** future son-in-law.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene,  
see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 73*

34  
Friar's words, Juliet's ring, and prospect of seeing Juliet have completely changed Romeo's mood. Reminder that abrupt changes have occurred before; his lovesick melancholy changed to joy when he met Juliet; his desire to be friendly to Tybalt changed to fury after Mercutio's death.

35  
**Plot.** Friar will use Romeo's servant to send messages to Romeo in Mantua.

36  
Friar Laurence intends to remain Romeo's guardian angel.

#### Scene 4

1  
Shakespeare establishes that it is late at night. As Capulet and Paris talk, Romeo and Juliet are in another part of the house.

2  
At this point it is understood that Juliet will be allowed to decide whether she wants to marry Paris.

3  
**Plot.** A complication for Romeo and Juliet: Capulet's impulsive offer is matched by his equally impulsive decision to have wedding almost immediately.



4 Capulet assumes that Juliet's distress is grief over Tybalt's death. He thinks that her marrying Paris will cheer her up.

5 Capulet knows that he is acting in haste, and he is concerned about appearances.

6 What does the haste with which Capulet arranges the marriage tell us about him? He is impetuous and somewhat overbearing.

7 If she should go to Juliet's room, she might find her daughter in Romeo's arms.

## Scene 5

1 A playful delay by Juliet. She knows well that it is nearly dawn, but she is reluctant for Romeo to go.

2 Figurative language. Stars are compared to candles, and day is personified in these famous lines.

3 Romeo realistically faces alternatives. He is less sentimental, less extreme in his behavior than before.

Paris. Monday, my lord.  
Capulet. Monday! Ha, ha! Well, Wednesday is too soon.

4 O' Thursday let it be. O' Thursday, tell her,  
She shall be married to this noble Earl.  
Will you be ready? Do you like this haste?  
We'll keep no great ado, a friend or two;  
For, hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,<sup>o</sup>  
5 It may be thought we held him carelessly,<sup>o</sup>  
Being our kinsman, if we revel much.  
Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,  
6 And there an end. But what say you to Thursday?

Paris. My lord, I would that Thursday were tomorrow.

Capulet. Well, get you gone. O' Thursday be it, then  
7 Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,  
Prepare her, wife, against<sup>o</sup> this wedding day.  
Farewell, my lord. Light to my chamber, ho!  
Afore me,<sup>o</sup> it is so very late  
That we may call it early by and by.  
Good night.

[Exeunt.]

## Scene 5

[Capulet's orchard. Enter Romeo and Juliet, above, at the window.]

Juliet. Wilt thou be gone? It is not yet near day.

1 It was the nightingale, and not the lark,<sup>o</sup>  
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.  
Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate tree.  
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Romeo. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,  
No nightingale. Look, love, what envious streaks  
Do lace<sup>o</sup> the severing clouds in yonder east.

2 Night's candles<sup>o</sup> are burnt out, and jocund day  
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountaintops.

3 I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Juliet. Yond light is not daylight, I know it, I.  
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,<sup>o</sup>  
To be to thee this night a torchbearer

24. late: lately, recently. 25. held him carelessly: did not care about him. 32. against: in readiness for. 34. Afore me: an oath meaning "before God."

2. nightingale . . . lark: The nightingale sings at night; the lark sings in the early morning. 8. lace: stripe. 9. Night's candles: the stars. 13. exhales: gives out.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 74



A scene from a 1936 film version of *Romeo and Juliet*.

And light thee on thy way to Mantua.  
Therefore stay yet—thou need'st not to be gone.

- 4** **Romeo.** Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death,  
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.  
I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,  
'Tis but the pale reflex<sup>20</sup> of Cynthia's<sup>20</sup> brow;  
Nor that is not the lark whose notes do beat  
**5** The vaulty heaven so high above our heads.

**20.** **reflex:** reflection. **Cynthia's:** the moon's.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The 1936 film version of *Romeo and Juliet* starred Leslie Howard as Romeo and Norma Shearer as Juliet. In comparison with more recent versions, this film provides vivid evidence of changing tastes in America. Note, for instance, the heavy makeup, stiff hairstyles, and extravagant clothing here as opposed to those on p. 538. Regardless of styles, however, the story continues to triumph.

### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to write essays in which they make an argument in favor of one of the portrayals of Juliet in the movie stills used in the textbook. It might be helpful to show the class a film of the play.

**4**

Romeo playfully pretends to give in, to stay, while emphasizing that he will be killed if he does not leave soon.

**5**

As in balcony scene, when they declared their love for each other, Romeo and Juliet repeatedly use images of light and of birds.

— says 'OK, I'll stay & die  
if that's what you  
want ..."

15

20

6  
Why does Juliet decide that the singing bird is the lark after all? She does not want to endanger Romeo by detaining him until daylight.

7  
Why does Juliet call the lark's song discordant? She associates it with Romeo's departure.

8  
Symbol. Although earlier images of light symbolized love, light of day now portends danger.

9  
Juliet shrewdly arranged for Nurse to act as watch.

10  
Juliet has feeling of intense foreboding. Their moments of happiness together are near an end.

11  
Foreshadowing. Juliet foresees Romeo's fate with uncanny accuracy.

I have more care to stay than will to go.  
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.  
How is 't, my soul? Let's talk. It is not day.

6 Juliet. It is, it is. Hie hence, be gone, away!  
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,  
7 Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.  
Some say the lark makes sweet division.<sup>29</sup>  
This doth not so, for she divideth us.  
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes.<sup>31</sup>  
Oh, now I would they had changed voices too!  
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,<sup>33</sup>  
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up<sup>34</sup> to the day.  
Oh, now be gone, more light and light it grows.

8 Romeo. More light and light. More dark and dark our woes!

[Enter Nurse, to the chamber.]

Nurse. Madam!

Juliet. Nurse?

9 Nurse. Your lady mother is coming to your chamber.  
The day is broke, be wary, look about.

Juliet. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Romeo. Farewell, farewell! One kiss, and I'll descend.

[He climbs down by the ladder of cords.]

Juliet. Art thou gone so? Love, lord, aye, husband, friend!

I must hear from thee every day in the hour,

For in a minute there are many days.

Oh, by this count I shall be much in years

Ere I again behold my Romeo!

Romeo. Farewell!

I will omit no opportunity

That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

10 Juliet. Oh, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

Romeo. I doubt it not, and all these woes shall serve

For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Juliet. Oh God! I have an ill-divining<sup>35</sup> soul.

11 Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,

As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.

Either my eyesight fails or thou look'st pale.

OK go, you're right.  
Romeo will be killed  
if he doesn't go now.

preachy  
tells her it will be all right.

29. **division**: melody. 31. **change eyes**: People believed that the toad and lark had once exchanged eyes. This belief would explain why larks are beautiful but have ugly eyes while toads are ugly but have beautiful eyes. 33. **affray**: frighten. 34. **hunt's-up**: hunters' morning song. 54. **ill-divining**: fearful, foreseeing evil.



**Romeo.** And trust me, love, in my eye so do you.

Dry sorrow drinks<sup>o</sup> our blood. Adieu, adieu!

**Juliet.** O Fortune, Fortune, all men call thee fickle.

If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him

**12** That is renowned for faith? Be fickle, Fortune,

For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,

But send him back.

**Lady Capulet.** [*Within*] Ho, daughter! Are you up?

**Juliet.** Who is 't that calls? It is my lady mother!

Is she not down so late, or up so early?

What unaccustomed cause procures her hither?

[*Enter Lady Capulet.*]

**13** **Lady Capulet.** Why, how now, Juliet!

**Juliet.** Madam, I am not well.

**14** **Lady Capulet.** Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?

What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?

And if thou couldst, thou couldst not make him live,

Therefore have done. Some grief shows much of love,

But much of grief shows still some want of wit.

**Juliet.** Yet let me weep for such a feeling<sup>o</sup> loss.

**Lady Capulet.** So shall you feel the loss, but not the friend

Which you weep for.

**Juliet.** Feeling so the loss,

I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

**Lady Capulet.** Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for his death

As that the villain lives which slaughtered him.

**Juliet.** What villain, madam?

**Lady Capulet.** That same villain, Romeo.

**15** **Juliet.** [*Aside*] Villain and he be many miles asunder.

God pardon him! I do, with all my heart,

**16** And yet no man like<sup>o</sup> he doth grieve my heart.

**Lady Capulet.** That is because the traitor murderer lives.

**17** **Juliet.** Aye, madam, from the reach of these my hands.

Would none but I might venge my cousin's death!

**Lady Capulet.** We will have vengeance for it, fear thou not.

Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,

Where that same banished runagate<sup>o</sup> doth live,

Shall give such an unaccustomed dram<sup>o</sup>

59. **drinks:** drains. Sorrow was believed to drain the blood. 75. **feeling:** deeply felt. 84. **like:** as much as. 90. **runagate:** runaway. 91. **unaccustomed dram:** unexpected dose.

- says they're both pale b/c they're sad.

- wrong person!

- she'll have someone kill Romeo.

**12**

Juliet thinks of Romeo as subject to fickle fortune. Audience is aware, however, that her fortune is about to take a curious turn. On the morning after her wedding night, she is to learn that she is promised to another man.

**13**

Audience knows news that Lady Capulet brings. Shakespeare, however, will build suspense by delaying Lady Capulet's announcement of it.

**14**

**Irony.** Lady Capulet assumes her daughter weeps for Tybalt. Lady Capulet and Juliet are talking of entirely different things, creating ambiguity.

**15**

Juliet's **aside** lets audience know exactly what she thinks before she speaks to her mother.

**16**

**Dramatic irony.** In this speech and in subsequent ones, Juliet's lines have a double meaning of which the audience is aware, but Lady Capulet is not.

**17**

Clever wording by Juliet. She wants Romeo in reach of her hands but not to harm him, and she does not want anyone else to harm him.

18

Juliet's pause before and after *dead* makes her mother hear "till I behold him dead." But Juliet means "dead is my poor heart."

19

Knowing of Lady Capulet's plot against Romeo, Juliet plans to foil it.

20

Juliet continues the ambiguity by using *wreak*, which has two meanings, "express" (what she means) and "revenge."

21

**Suspense.** Lady Capulet is about to reveal the news about arrangements for Juliet and Paris' wedding. Ironically, tidings are anything but joyful to Juliet.

22

Impact of Juliet's rejection of Paris is reinforced because audience sees as well as hears Lady Capulet's reaction to it.

23

In order to hide her feelings for Romeo, Juliet chooses her words very cleverly: "whom you know I hate" does not mean "whom I hate."

24

*How will Capulet respond to his daughter's rejection of Paris?* He will be angry. Shakespeare does not keep audience waiting to find out. Capulet makes immediate entrance.

That he shall soon keep Tybalt company.  
And then I hope thou wilt be satisfied.

- 18 **Juliet.** Indeed I never shall be satisfied  
With Romeo till I behold him—dead—  
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vexed.  
Madam, if you could find out but a man  
To bear a poison, I would temper° it,  
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,  
19 Soon sleep in quiet. Oh, how my heart abhors  
To hear him named and cannot come to him,  
20 To wreak° the love I bore my cousin  
Upon his body that hath slaughtered him!

**Lady Capulet.** Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.

- 21 But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

**Juliet.** And joy comes well in such a needy time.  
What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

**Lady Capulet.** Well, well, thou hast a careful° father, child,  
One who, to put thee from thy heaviness,  
Hath sorted° out a sudden day of joy,  
That thou expect'st not, nor I looked not for.

**Juliet.** Madam, in happy time,° what day is that?

**Lady Capulet.** Marry, my child, early next Thursday, morn,  
The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,  
The County Paris, at Saint Peter's Church  
22 Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

**Juliet.** Now, by Saint Peter's Church, and Peter too,  
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.  
I wonder at this haste, that I must wed  
Ere he that should be husband comes to woo.  
I pray you tell my lord and father, madam,  
I will not marry yet. And when I do, I swear

- 23 It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,  
Rather than Paris. These are news indeed!

24 **Lady Capulet.** Here comes your father, tell him so yourself  
And see how he will take it at your hands.

[Enter Capulet and Nurse.]

**Capulet.** When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew,  
But for the sunset of my brother's son  
It rains downright.

98. **temper:** mix. 102. **wreak:** revenge. 108. **careful:** considerate. 110. **sorted:** chosen. 112. **in happy time:** indeed.

*she's feeling her mother, trying maybe, to foil Lady Capulet's plot to poison Romeo.*

*hiding feelings. "I'd consent to such a man."*

95

100

105

110

115

120

125

25 How now! A conduit,<sup>o</sup> girl? What, still in tears? 130  
 26 Evermore showering? In one little body  
 Thou counterfeit'st<sup>a</sup> a bark,<sup>o</sup> a sea, a wind.  
 For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,  
 Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,  
 Sailing in this salt flood, the winds, thy sighs, 135  
 Who raging with thy tears, and they with them,  
 Without a sudden calm will overset  
 Thy tempest-tossed body. How now, wife!  
 Have you delivered to her our decree?  
**Lady Capulet.** Aye, sir, but she will none, she gives you thanks.  
 I would the fool were married to her grave!  
**Capulet.** Soft! Take me with you, take me with you,<sup>o</sup> wife.  
 How! Will she none? Doth she not give us thanks?  
 Is she not proud? Doth she not count her blest,  
 27 Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought  
 So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?  
**Juliet.** Not proud you have, but thankful that you have.  
 Proud can I never be of what I hate,  
 28 But thankful even for hate that is meant love.  
 29 **Capulet.** How, how! How, how! Chop-logic!<sup>o</sup> What is this?  
 "Proud," and "I thank you," and "I thank you not,"  
 And yet "not proud." Mistress minion,<sup>o</sup> you,  
 Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no pouds,  
 But fettle<sup>o</sup> your fine joints 'gainst Thursday next,  
 To go with Paris to Saint Peter's Church,  
 Or I will drag thee on a hurdle<sup>o</sup> thither. 150  
 Out, you green-sickness carrion!<sup>o</sup> Out, you baggage!  
 You tallow-face!  
**Lady Capulet.** [To Capulet] Fie, fie! What, are you mad?  
**Juliet.** Good Father, I beseech you on my knees,  
 Hear me with patience but to speak a word. 160  
**Capulet.** Hang thee, young baggage! Disobedient wretch!  
 I tell thee what. Get thee to church o' Thursday  
 Or never after look me in the face.  
 30 Speak not, reply not, do not answer me. - *truly she should be dancing wifely to*  
 31 My fingers itch. Wife, we scarce thought us blest - *merry July a great guy.*  
 32 That God had lent us but this only child, - *thinks. Anyway. It's the thought that*  
 But now I see this one is one too much, - *goes off on Juliet. He's really buggered.* 165

25  
**Why is Juliet crying?** She is crying because her parents expect her to marry Paris.

26  
**Metaphor.** Capulet describes the distraught Juliet as a "tempest-tossed" boat. Her tears are compared to saltwater of the sea, her body to a "bark" (boat), and her sighs to the wind.

27  
 Capulet thinks that Juliet should be grateful to him for having arranged such an advantageous marriage for her.

28  
 Even though she does not like what he has arranged, Juliet thanks him for his good intentions and love.

29  
 Capulet is not listening to what Juliet has to say. All he hears is that he is being defied by his daughter. He is enraged.

30  
 Capulet is so furious over Juliet's refusal to marry Paris that he threatens to disown her. Although she finds her husband's anger alarming, Lady Capulet is also displeased with Juliet.

31  
**Why does Capulet say "My fingers itch"?** In his rage, he feels like beating his daughter for disobedience.

32  
 Ironically, Capulet's rage contributes to the death of "this only child."

130. **conduit:** fountain. 132. **Thou counterfeit'st:** You imitate. **bark:** boat. 142. **Take me with you:** What do you mean? 150. **Chop-logic:** hair-splitting. 152. **Mistress minion:** saucy miss. 154. **fettle:** make ready. 156. **hurdle:** a frame used to carry condemned criminals to execution. 157. **green-sickness carrion:** anemic lump of flesh.



33

Nurse tries to intervene but is contemptuously dismissed. To Capulet, she is, after all, only a woman and a lowly nurse.

34

Lady Capulet again warns her husband that he is letting his temper run away with him, fearing perhaps he will become physically abusive.

35

Capulet claims that he has been working a long time to find advantageous match for Juliet. Thinks she is acting like an ungrateful fool.

36

*What reaction to the wedding announcement did Capulet expect from Juliet? What does this tell us about his character?* He probably expected her to be obedient, grateful, and happy. Insensitive Capulet sees nothing wrong with the arranged marriage, nor does he allow for the fact that, for his daughter, falling in love is a desirable prerequisite.

37

Blinded by his temper, Capulet makes threats to Juliet he surely would not carry out.

38

Capulet promised Juliet to Paris and will have to break word if Juliet will not marry. People will wonder whether he is master of his household.

And that we have a curse in having her.  
Out on her, hilding!<sup>169</sup>

**Nurse:** God in Heaven bless her!

33 **You are to blame, my lord, to rate<sup>170</sup> her so.**

**Capulet.** And why, my lady wisdom? Hold your tongue,  
Good prudence. Smatter<sup>171</sup> with your gossips,<sup>172</sup> go.

**Nurse.** I speak no treason.

**Capulet.** Oh, God ye godden.

**Nurse.** May not one speak?

**Capulet.** Peace, you mumbling fool!

Utter your gravity<sup>173</sup> o'er a gossip's bowl,  
For here we need it not.

34 **Lady Capulet.** You are too hot.

**Capulet.** [To Juliet] God's bread!<sup>174</sup> It makes me mad.

Day, night, hour, tide, time, work, play,

Alone, in company, still<sup>175</sup> my care hath been

35 **To have her matched. And having now provided**

A gentleman of noble parentage,

Of fair demesnes,<sup>176</sup> youthful, and nobly trained,

Stuffed,<sup>177</sup> as they say, with honorable parts,<sup>178</sup>

Proportioned as one's thought would wish a man—

And then to have a wretched puling<sup>179</sup> fool,

A whining mammet,<sup>180</sup> in her fortune's tender,<sup>181</sup>

36 **To answer "I'll not wed, I cannot love,**

I am too young, I pray you, pardon me."

But an you will not wed, I'll pardon you.

Graze where you will, you shall not house with me.

Look to't, think on't, I do not use to<sup>182</sup> jest.

Thursday is near. Lay hand on heart, advise.<sup>183</sup>

An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend.

37 **An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die in the streets,**

For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,

Nor what is mine shall never do thee good—

38 **Trust to't, bethink you, I'll not be forsworn.<sup>184</sup>**

**Juliet.** Is there no pity sitting in the clouds

That sees into the bottom of my grief?

O sweet my mother, cast me not away!

Delay this marriage for a month, a week;

*TELL Nurse off.  
He's being a jerk.  
doesn't want him to have off & snoot Juliet.*

*Paris is sooo great, she should be grabbing at the chance.  
He'll toss her out if she doesn't marry.*

[Exit.]

169. **hilding:** worthless girl. 170. **rate:** scold. 172. **Smatter:** chatter. **gossips:** cronies. 175. **gravity:** wise words. 177. **God's bread:** by the sacred host. 179. **still:** always. 182. **demesnes** (dī-mānz'): estates, wealth. 183. **stuffed:** full. **parts:** qualities. 185. **puling:** whining. 186. **mammet:** doll. **in her fortune's tender:** when good fortune is offered to her. 191. **use to:** usually. 192. **advise:** be careful. 197. **be forsworn:** break my vow.

39 Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed  
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies.

40 **Lady Capulet.** Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a word.  
Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [Exit.] 205

**Juliet.** Oh, God!—O Nurse, how shall this be prevented?  
My husband is on earth, my faith in Heaven.  
How shall that faith return again to earth  
Unless that husband send it me from Heaven  
By leaving earth? Comfort me, counsel me.  
Alack, alack, that Heaven should practice stratagems°  
Upon so soft a subject as myself! - she's really distraught.  
What say'st thou? Hast thou not a word of joy? 210  
Some comfort, Nurse.

**Nurse.** Faith, here it is.  
Romeo is banished, and all the world to nothing°  
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge° you;  
Or if he do, it needs must be by stealth. 215

42 Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,  
I think it best you married with the County.  
Oh, he's a lovely gentleman!  
Romeo's a dishclout to him.° An eagle, madam,  
Hath not so green, so quick, so fair an eye  
As Paris hath. Beshrew° my very heart,  
I think you are happy in this second match,  
For it excels your first. Or if it did not,  
Your first is dead, or 'twere as good he were  
As living here and you no use of him. - tells her to marry Paris; she might as well.

**Juliet.** Speakest thou from thy heart?

**Nurse.** And from my soul too, else beshrew them both. - yes, curse heart & soul! Disown Nurse.

**Juliet.** Amen!

**Nurse.** What?

**Juliet.** Well, thou hast comforted me marvelous much. 230

43 Go in, and tell my lady I am gone,  
Having displeased my father, to Laurence' cell,  
To make confession and to be absolved. - is she really going to Friar for that reason?

44 **Nurse:** Marry, I will, and this is wisely done. [Exit.] 235

**Juliet.** Ancient damnation!° Oh, most wicked fiend!  
Is it more sin to wish me thus forsworn,°  
Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue

39 **Foreshadowing.** Shakespeare again lets audience glimpse Juliet's eventual fate.

40 Juliet has made a moving plea, but Lady Capulet has seemingly not heard a word of it. She echoes her husband's threat to disown Juliet.

41 Juliet feels trapped by fate.

42 Nurse gives Juliet shocking advice: since Romeo is gone and cannot come back, Juliet should marry Paris.

43 Juliet displays remarkable self-control as she coolly dismisses Nurse from her life. She will never trust her again and certainly will not let Nurse know anything of future plans.

44 Juliet misleads Nurse and the Capulets about the real reason for going to Friar Laurence.

211. **stratagems:** violent deeds. 215. **all the world to nothing:** the odds are overwhelming. 216. **challenge:** claim. 221. **to him:** compared to him. 223. **Beshrew:** curse. 235. **Ancient damnation:** old devil. 236. **forsworn:** perjured.

45

Realizing that Nurse cannot be trusted, Juliet is completely isolated from her family and household. She decides to turn to Friar Laurence for help, an action that will have dire consequences.

### READING CHECK

1. Capulets are abroad; people are quarrelsome in hot weather (p. 529).
2. He is banished (p. 535).
3. Hides and comforts him; will send news (pp. 542–545).
4. He will disown her (p. 552).
5. Friar Laurence (p. 553).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. Tybalt's challenge (Act Two, Scene 4) and dueling skill were mentioned before. Mercutio says Benvolio is quick to pick a quarrel.
- 1b. Tybalt is hot-tempered; hates Montagues, especially Romeo. Mercutio is impulsive, quick-witted, devoted to Romeo.
- 2a. Romeo considers himself kin to Capulets, even Tybalt. 2b. As "calm, dishonorable, vile submission." 2c. He dislikes Tybalt; resents his insults.
- 3a. At first, she calls him "serpent heart, hid with a flowering face." 3b. Realizes how much she loves Romeo, how dreadful the loss if Tybalt had killed him.
- 3c. Juliet loved Tybalt but loves Romeo more.
- 4a. Nurse brings Juliet's ring, news of Juliet. 4b. In Act One, from sadness of unrequited love for Rosaline to joy of love for Juliet. In Act Three, Romeo's desire to be friendly toward Tybalt becomes fury when Mercutio dies.

Which she hath praised him with above compare  
So many thousand times? Go, counselor.  
Thou and my bosom<sup>o</sup> henceforth shall be twain.  
I'll to the Friar, to know his remedy.  
If all else fail, myself have power to die.

45

240. **bosom**: inner thoughts.

*No family left  
If friar can't help  
her, she'll  
kill herself.*

[Exit.]

240

### Reading Check

1. At the opening of the act, why does Benvolio advise Mercutio to leave the streets of Verona?
2. How is Romeo punished for Tybalt's death?
3. How does Friar Laurence help Romeo?
4. What does Capulet threaten to do if Juliet refuses to marry Paris?
5. To whom does Juliet decide to go for help?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

- 1a. How has the audience been prepared for the dueling scene at the opening of Act Three?
- b. What have you learned about Tybalt and Mercutio that makes their actions in this scene consistent with their characters?
- 2a. Why does Romeo refuse to accept Tybalt's challenge? b. How does Mercutio interpret Romeo's action? c. Why does he decide to fight Tybalt?
- 3a. How does Juliet first react when she learns that Romeo has killed Tybalt? b. Why does she then change her mind? c. What do these reactions show about her?

4. At the opening of Scene 3, Romeo is in despair. a. What happens to raise his spirits?
- b. Where else in the play has Romeo shown a sudden change in spirits?
5. In Act One Capulet was not eager to see Juliet married. Why has he suddenly decided to accept Paris' offer?
- 6a. Why are Capulet and his wife surprised by Juliet's refusal to marry? b. How do they react? c. How has Shakespeare prepared you for Capulet's reaction in earlier scenes of the play?
- 7a. What is the Nurse's advice to Juliet?
- b. Why do you suppose Juliet pretends to be comforted by the Nurse? c. What has she realized she must do?

### Literary Elements

#### Dramatic Structure: Plot

Most plays begin with an **exposition**, an introduction to the situation and setting of the action. The first act of *Romeo and Juliet* presents the conflict between the Montagues and Capulets. Out of the enmity between these two houses will grow misfortune for all the major characters in the play. When the lovers meet at the Capulet party, the main action is set into motion.

The exposition of a play is followed by the **rising action**, a sequence of events that lead to



## CLOSURE

Ask students to list the events that occur as inevitable consequences of Romeo's killing Tybalt. Also, have them identify consistent character traits in Juliet, Romeo, and Capulet.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Some students might enjoy reading Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*. It contains simplified versions of six of the tragedies and fourteen of the comedies. Although written for children, the work is quite enjoyable for readers

at all levels. Following its example, some students might like to rewrite one scene from *Romeo and Juliet*, translating it into contemporary English, even slang.

a **turning point, or crisis.** During the second act, Romeo and Juliet declare their love and get married. They have not yet been struck by tragedy. There is even a possibility, nursed by Friar Laurence, that the marriage of the lovers will serve to unite the warring factions. But in Act Three, Tybalt kills Mercutio, and Romeo kills Tybalt. This is the turning point of the play; it determines how the action will come out.

Following the turning point is the **falling action**, which ends with the **resolution**, or conclusion of the play. The fortunes of the lovers steadily decline. Romeo is banished. The lovers must separate. Juliet finds herself alone, without the support of her parents or the Nurse. The action from this point on will lead directly to the final catastrophe. The **climax**, the point of greatest emotional intensity, usually comes at the end of a Shakespearean play.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Recognizing Classical Allusions

The heroes and gods of ancient Greek and Roman mythology, largely forgotten during Medieval times, were of great interest during the Renaissance, when Shakespeare lived. References to these ancient heroes and gods are known as **classical allusions**.

Here is a classical allusion from Act Three, Scene 2:

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,  
Toward Phoebus' lodging.

The allusion, as the footnote tells, is to the horses of Phoebus (Apollo) the sun god, who, as the myth would have it, drove his chariot (the sun) across the sky each day. Juliet is urging the sun to hurry across the sky and set.

- 1 Using a dictionary or a book of mythology, explain the allusion in each of these quotations:

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

- a But all so soon as the all-cheering sun  
Should in the farthest east begin to draw  
The shady curtains from *Aurora's* bed . . .  
(I, 1, 120–122)  
She'll not be hit
- b With *Cupid's* arrow.  
(I, 1, 194–195)
- c Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud,  
Else would I tear the cave where *Echo* lies  
And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine  
With repetition of my Romeo's name.  
(II, 2, 160–163)
- d I'll say yon gray is not the morning's eye,  
'Tis but the pale reflex of *Cynthia's* brow . . .  
(III, 5, 19–20)

## Writing About Literature

### ► Discussing Shakespeare's Presentation of Young Characters

*Romeo and Juliet* contains portraits of several young people in addition to the lovers: Mercutio and Benvolio, Romeo's friends; Tybalt, Romeo's enemy; and Paris, Romeo's rival. How does Shakespeare emphasize the qualities of rashness and impulsiveness in these figures? How does he show their love of merri-ment? Where does he reveal their strong bonds of loyalty? Write a short essay in which you answer these questions.

WRITE ABOUT

FRIAR to ROMEO  
NURSE to JULIET

-parental figures  
-trust  
-why these instead of parents.

5. May think marriage will lessen Juliet's grief over Tybalt's death.

6a. They don't know Juliet has married Romeo. They think Paris ideal choice for husband. Juliet has always been obedient. 6b. Capulet is furious; says she'll marry Paris or he will disown her. Her mother says little; will not delay wedding. 6c. Act One shows Capulet ready to enter street fight despite his age. Later he enjoys giving party for Juliet to meet Paris. Capulet likes to have his own way; has violent temper.

7a. Forget Romeo; marry "lovely gentleman" Paris. 7b. Responses will vary. She does not want Nurse to suspect plan. 7c. Ask Friar Laurence for help.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

- 1a. Aurora: Greek goddess of dawn.
- 1b. Cupid: god of love; Venus' son.
- 1c. Echo: a mythological nymph doomed to repeat others' words.
- 1d. Cynthia: another name for Artemis, goddess of the moon.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Emphasize the importance of finding examples and showing how they illustrate the point being argued. Students should have no difficulty finding examples of rashness and impulsiveness. Romeo and Benvolio's "crashing" of the party and the instant, mutual attraction of Romeo and Juliet (Act One, Scene 5) are two good examples. Love of merri-ment, shown in puns and jests throughout the play, also is seen in Mercutio and Benvolio's teasing of Romeo (Act One, Scene 4) and in teasing of the Nurse (Act Two, Scene 4). Loyalty is shown in Mercutio's "Queen Mab" speech (Act One, Scene 4); the duels, Benvolio's speech to Escalus (Act Three, Scene 1); Juliet's mourning for Tybalt (Act Three, Scene 5).

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze Juliet's **internal conflict** and growth of character in this act. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 570 differentiates between archaic meanings and obsolete meanings and gives practice in identifying some archaic meanings.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Students may remember events which forced them to grow psychologically by facing up to harsh realities. In Act Four, Juliet suddenly must be willing to risk death if she wants a life with her husband Romeo.

### Act Four

#### Scene 1

1

Friar tries to persuade Paris marriage is not good idea on such short notice and without Juliet's consent.

2

**Allusion.** Love is portrayed as the Roman goddess Venus.

3

**What does Paris say is the reason for arranging the wedding so hastily? Is this true?** Capulet regards Juliet's lonely tears as dangerous and wants her cheered up with companionship. Probably so, based on evidence in play and on Capulet's character.

4

**Aside.** Friar speaks his private thoughts in aside. In difficult position, he knows that the marriage should be "slowed," not hurried up.

5

**Why doesn't the Friar tell Paris and the Capulets that Juliet is already married?** Apparently he feels that telling truth at this time would be dangerous for Romeo and Juliet and for himself.

6

**Irony.** Juliet's verbal wit works because audience and Friar know her true feelings, but Paris does not.

7

Juliet uses *may*, *should*, and *if*, as well as ambiguous constructions and references, to evade Paris' remarks. "Him" in this line refers to Romeo, not Friar.

### Act Four

#### Scene 1

[Friar Laurence's cell. Enter Friar Laurence and Paris.]

**Friar Laurence.** On Thursday, sir? The time is very short.

**Paris.** My father<sup>o</sup> Capulet will have it so,  
And I am nothing slow to slack his haste.<sup>o</sup>

1 **Friar Laurence.** You say you do not know the lady's mind.  
Uneven is the course,<sup>o</sup> I like it not.

**Paris.** Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,  
And therefore have I little talked of love,

2 For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.

3 Now, sir, her father counts it dangerous  
That she doth give her sorrow so much sway,  
And in his wisdom hastes our marriage,  
To stop the inundation<sup>o</sup> of her tears,  
Which, too much minded<sup>o</sup> by herself alone,  
May be put from her by society.<sup>o</sup>

Now do you know the reason of this haste.

4 **Friar Laurence.** [Aside] I would I knew not why it should be slowed.

5 Look, sir, here comes the lady toward my cell.

[Enter Juliet.]

**Paris.** Happily met, my lady and my wife!

6 **Juliet.** That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

**Paris.** That may be must be, love, on Thursday next.

**Juliet.** What must be shall be.

**Friar Laurence.** That's a certain text.

**Paris.** Come you to make confession to this Father?

**Juliet.** To answer that, I should confess to you.

**Paris.** Do not deny to him that you love me.

7 **Juliet.** I will confess to you that I love him.

**Paris.** So will ye, I am sure, that you love me.

**Juliet.** If I do so, it will be of more price

Being spoke behind your back than to your face.

**Paris.** Poor soul, thy face is much abused with tears.

2. **father:** future father-in-law. 3. **And...haste:** I am as eager as he to hasten the marriage. 5. **Uneven is the course:** a rough proceeding. 12. **inundation:** flood. 13. **minded:** brooded over. 14. **society:** the company of others.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this act and scene, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 75 / Selection Test 43 / Reading Check 41 / Vocabulary Test 25 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 55

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

When Juliet goes to Friar Laurence's cell, she finds Count Paris there arranging to marry her on Thursday. After Paris leaves, Juliet asks the Friar to help her or let her kill herself.

The Friar tells her to pretend to consent to the

wedding plans and then to drink a potion which will put her in a deathlike sleep. After she has been entombed, Romeo will rescue her and they can flee together.

Juliet's father is so pleased by her obedience that he moves the wedding up to Wednesday.

## PRESENTATION

Students should focus on Juliet's internal conflict and growth of character in this act. Juliet is intensely loyal to Romeo. She is ready to devise any plan or brave any danger in order to be reunited with him.

**Juliet.** The tears have got small victory by that,  
For it was bad enough before their spite.<sup>31</sup> 30

**Paris.** Thou wrong'st it more than tears with that report.

**Juliet.** That is no slander, sir, which is a truth,  
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

**Paris.** Thy face is mine, and thou hast slandered it. 35

**8 Juliet.** It may be so, for it is not mine own.

Are you at leisure, holy Father, now,  
Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

**Friar Laurence.** My leisure serves me, pensive<sup>32</sup> daughter, now.  
My lord, we must entreat the time alone. 40

**Paris.** God shield<sup>33</sup> I should disturb devotion!  
Juliet, on Thursday early will I rouse ye.

**9** **Juliet.** Till then, adieu, and keep this holy kiss. [Exit.]

**Juliet.** Oh, shut the door, and when thou hast done so,  
Come weep with me—past hope, past cure, past help! 45

**Friar Laurence.** Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief.

It strains me past the compass<sup>34</sup> of my wits.  
I hear thou must, and nothing may prurogue<sup>35</sup> it,

**10** On Thursday next be married to this County.

**Juliet.** Tell me not, Friar, that thou hear'st of this,  
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it. 50

If in thy wisdom thou canst give no help,  
Do thou but call my resolution wise, [Draws a dagger]  
And with this knife I'll help it presently.<sup>36</sup>

**11** God joined my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands,  
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo's sealed,  
Shall be the label to another deed,<sup>37</sup> 55

Or my true heart with treacherous revolt  
Turn to another, this shall slay them both.  
Therefore, out of thy long-experienced time,

**12** Give me some present counsel; or, behold,  
'Twixt my extremes<sup>38</sup> and me this bloody knife  
Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that  
Which the commission<sup>39</sup> of thy years and art  
Could to no issue of true honor bring. 60

**13** Be not so long to speak, I long to die

**14** If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

**Friar Laurence.** Hold, daughter. I do spy a kind of hope,  
Which craves as desperate an execution

**8**

Juliet means her face is not hers but Romeo's. She ends the interview by asking the Friar whether she may talk with him.

**9**

Paris is accustomed to having his way. Despite Juliet's lack of affection for him, Paris assumes that their wedding will go ahead as planned.

**10**

For the moment, Friar assumes that nothing can be done to avert Juliet's impending marriage to Paris. Shakespeare is preparing audience to accept the desperate solution to Juliet's problems that the Friar will shortly propose.

**11**

**Why does Juliet mention suicide?** If Friar cannot help her, Juliet wants permission to commit suicide, ordinarily a mortal sin. She would rather die than break her sacred vows to Romeo.

**12**

**Personification.** Juliet speaks of the dagger as if it could choose to do what she may not wish to do and the Friar may not advise her to do.

**13**

Juliet has lost virtually all hope. Romeo is banished, and she is about to be forced into a loveless, bigamous marriage. Death seems only way out.

**14**

Juliet makes last appeal to Friar.

31. **spite:** injury. 39. **pensive:** thoughtful, solemn. 41. **shield:** forbid. 47. **compass:** reach. 48. **prurogue:** postpone. 54. **presently:** immediately. 56–57. **ere...** **deed:** before my hand agrees to another contract. 62. **extremes:** misfortunes. 64. **commission:** authority.



Juliet's isolation from normal psychological contacts and emotional supports intensifies the difficulty of her situation. She cannot speak with her mother and father about her problems. The Nurse also has shown disloyalty: she cannot be consulted about decisions and cannot be trusted

to help carry messages or to keep secrets. Juliet has only one friend in this time of crisis, Friar Laurence.

Students may deplore the harshness of Juliet's parents and the fickleness of the Nurse but will probably feel some sympathy for the household

that must turn from wedding hymns to "sullen dirges."

If your students are writing scene-by-scene summaries, they may profit from using a few minutes of class time to get together in small groups and compare their summaries.

15

Friar senses that Juliet is strong enough to take desperate measures against marrying Paris.

16

**Imagery.** Juliet says she is willing to face any danger or horror to remain true to vows she and Romeo have made. Her imagination runs wild as she tells what she would be willing to endure.

17

Ironically, the images she creates are close to what she will see.

18

Audience knows that Friar Laurence is an apothecary, knowledgeable about herbs and poisons. Nevertheless, for Juliet to take a potion that will make her appear dead seems like a dangerous undertaking.

19

*How long will Juliet remain as though dead?* Forty-two hours.

As that is desperate which we would prevent.

If, rather than to marry County Paris,

Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself,

15 Then is it likely thou wilt undertake

A thing like death to chide away this shame,

That copest<sup>75</sup> with death himself to 'scape from it.

And, if thou darest, I'll give thee remedy.

16 **Juliet.** Oh, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,

From off the battlements of yonder tower;

Or walk in thievish ways; or bid me lurk

Where serpents are; chain me with roaring bears;

Or shut me nightly in a charnel house,<sup>81</sup>

O'ercover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,

With reeky<sup>83</sup> shanks and yellow chapless<sup>84</sup> skulls;

17 Or bid me go into a new-made grave,

And hide me with a dead man in his shroud—

Things that to hear them told have made me tremble—

And I will do it without fear or doubt,

To live an unstained wife to my sweet love.

**Friar Laurence.** Hold, then, go home, be merry, give consent

To marry Paris. Wednesday is tomorrow.

Tomorrow night look that thou lie alone,

Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber.

Take thou this vial, being then in bed,

And this distill'd liquor drink thou off,

When presently through all thy veins shall run

A cold and drowsy humor;<sup>96</sup> for no pulse

Shall keep his native<sup>97</sup> progress, but surcease.<sup>98</sup>

No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou livest.

The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade

To paly ashes, thy eyes' windows fall,

18 Like death when he shuts up the day of life.

Each part, deprived of supple government,<sup>102</sup>

Shall, stiff and stark and cold, appear like death.

And in this borrowed likeness of shrunk death

Thou shalt continue two and forty hours,

19 And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.

Now, when the bridegroom in the morning comes

To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead.

Then, as the manner of our country is,

75. **copest:** deals. 81. **charnel house:** shed for bones from old graves. 83. **reeky:** stinking. **chapless:** without jaws.

96. **humor:** moisture, fluid. 97. **native:** natural. **surcease:** cease. 102. **supple government:** ability to move.



A scene from a 1968 film version of *Romeo and Juliet*.

In thy best robes uncovered on the bier  
 Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault  
 Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.  
 In the meantime, against° thou shalt awake,  
 20 Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift,<°  
 And hither shall he come, and he and I  
 Will watch thy waking, and that very night  
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.  
 21 And this shall free thee from this present shame,  
 If no inconstant toy° nor womanish fear  
 22 Abate thy valor in the acting it. 120  
 23 Juliet. [Taking the vial] Give me, give me! Oh, tell not me of fear!

113. against: before. 114. drift: purpose, intention. 119. inconstant toy: fickle fancy, foolish whim.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In this still from Zeffirelli's film version of *Romeo and Juliet*, Friar Laurence has a chemistry laboratory with glass retorts, a graduated cylinder, a flask, and other glass paraphernalia. At the time of the play, or even in Shakespeare's time, Friar Laurence would have had no chemical laboratory and little equipment, perhaps a glass bottle or two, a few pottery vessels, and some baskets for herbs.

### 20

Use to answer study question 3b, p. 569.

### 21

The Friar's scheme is clever but depends on exact timing. On Wednesday evening, Juliet will take potion. Believing her dead, her family will take her to the family tomb. Romeo can then join her, and after she wakes on Friday, they can make their escape.

### 22

*What makes the Friar's plan seem at all possible?* He is an expert in herbs and poisons.

### 23

Juliet is desperate and needs no persuading.

24

**Plot.** A plan of action has been decided on. The action of the play is moving towards the final **catas-trophe**. Getting letters to Romeo is a key element in Friar's plan.

## Scene 2

1

Capulet is asking how this test will work to separate the good cooks from the bad ("ill") cooks.

2

**Pun.** The servant puns on *ill*. If the cook is so ill (diseased) that he cannot lick his fingers, the servant will not take him. A slur on Elizabethan cooks.

3

Juliet pretends penitence and meek obedience. She is a skilled actress. Her apparent change of heart sounds most convincing.

4

Capulet is delighted by Juliet's willingness to marry Paris, and his first thought is to get it done as quickly as possible.

5

Lord Capulet's impulsive change of wedding date (to the very next day) upsets Friar's schedule.

6

Juliet speaks truthfully but ambiguously, giving the impression that she had been friendly and encouraging—but proper—with Paris.

**Friar Laurence.** Hold, get you gone, be strong and prosperous

24 In this resolve. I'll send a friar with speed  
To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

**Juliet.** Love give me strength! And strength shall help afford.  
Farewell, dear Father!

[*Exeunt.*]

125

## Scene 2

[*Hall in Capulet's house. Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, Nurse, and two Servingmen.*]

**Capulet.** So many guests invite as here are writ.

[*Exit First Servant.*]

Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

**Second Servant.** You shall have none ill, sir, for I'll try if they can lick their fingers.

1 **Capulet.** How can'st thou try them so?

2 **Second Servant.** Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers. Therefore, he  
that cannot lick his fingers goes not with me.

5

**Capulet.** Go, be gone.

[*Exit Second Servant.*]

We shall be much unfurnished<sup>o</sup> for this time.

What, is my daughter gone to Friar Laurence?

**Nurse.** Aye, forsooth.

10

**Capulet.** Well, he may chance to do some good on her.

A peevish self-willed harlotry<sup>o</sup> it is.

[*Enter Juliet.*]

**Nurse.** See where she comes from shrift with merry look.

**Capulet.** How now, my headstrong! Where have you been gadding?

3 **Juliet.** Where I have learned me to repent the sin  
Of disobedient opposition

15

To you and your behests, and am enjoined

By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,

To beg your pardon. [*Kneeling*] Pardon, I beseech you!

Henceforward I am ever ruled by you.

20

4 **Capulet.** Send for the County, go tell him of this.

5 I'll have this knot knit up tomorrow morning.

**Juliet.** I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell,

6 And gave him what becomèd<sup>o</sup> love I might,  
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

25

**Capulet.** Why, I am glad on 't, this is well. Stand up.

This is as 't should be. Let me see the County.

8. **unfurnished:** unprepared. 12. **harlotry:** hussy. 24. **becomèd:** suitable, proper.



Aye, marry, go. I say, and fetch him hither.  
 7 Now, afore God, this reverend holy Friar,  
 All our whole city is much bound<sup>o</sup> to him.  
**Juliet.** Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,<sup>o</sup>  
 To help me sort<sup>o</sup> such needful ornaments  
 As you think fit to furnish me tomorrow?  
**Lady Capulet.** No, not till Thursday, there is time enough.  
 8 **Capulet.** Go, Nurse, go with her. We'll to church tomorrow. [Exeunt Juliet and Nurse.] 35  
 9 **Lady Capulet.** We shall be short in our provision.  
 'Tis now near night.  
**Capulet.** Tush, I will stir about,  
 And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife.  
 Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her.  
 I'll not to bed tonight, let me alone,  
 I'll play the housewife for this once. What ho!<sup>o</sup>  
 They are all forth. Well, I will walk myself  
 To County Paris, to prepare him up  
 10 Against tomorrow. My heart is wondrous light  
 Since this same wayward girl is so reclaimed. [Exeunt.] 45

### Scene 3

[Juliet's chamber. Enter Juliet and Nurse.]

**Juliet.** Aye, those attires are best. But, gentle Nurse,  
 I pray thee leave me to myself tonight;  
 For I have need of many orisons<sup>o</sup>  
 To move the Heavens to smile upon my state,<sup>o</sup>  
 1 Which well thou know'st, is cross<sup>o</sup> and full of sin. 5

[Enter Lady Capulet.]

**Lady Capulet.** What, are you busy, ho? Need you my help?

**Juliet.** No, madam, we have culled<sup>o</sup> such necessities  
 2 As are behooveful<sup>o</sup> for our state tomorrow.  
 3 So please you, let me now be left alone,  
 And let the nurse this night sit up with you,  
 For I am sure you have your hands full all  
 In this so sudden business. 10

30. **bound:** in debt. 31. **closet:** small private room. 32. **sort:** select. 41. **What ho!:** Capulet calls for a servant.  
 3. **orisons:** prayers. 4. **state:** condition. 5. **cross:** amiss. 7. **culled:** selected. 8. **behooveful:** fit.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene,  
 see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 75*

uh oh, changes day. Friar's plan has a glitch.

7  
**Irony.** Capulet is unaware of full extent of Friar Laurence's involvement in the Capulet family's life.

8  
 In his hurry to get Juliet married, Capulet has moved the wedding day up from Thursday to Wednesday. Thus, Juliet will need to take the potion a day earlier, but Romeo will not know to come so soon. The Friar's ingenious scheme is already beginning to unravel.

9  
 As a hostess, Lady Capulet is concerned about getting provisions for the wedding, something her husband has not thought about.

10  
**Irony.** The audience is keenly aware that Capulet's rejoicing is premature, that he is losing Juliet, not reclaiming her.

### Scene 3

1  
 Juliet may be alluding to fact that her father is unwittingly forcing her into bigamy, a sinful state.

2  
 Juliet's use of the word *state* may foreshadow her "lying in state" after taking potion.

3  
**Characterization.** Juliet needs to be left alone to take the potion. She arranges this with her usual skill in managing people.

4

Lady Capulet, unaware she is talking with Juliet for the last time, does not express love for her.

5

In this long **soliloquy**, Juliet expresses anxieties about her situation and what she must do.

6

One of the most terrifying aspects of the Friar's scheme is that Juliet must go through with it alone, though she desperately needs human comfort.

7

**Conflict.** Juliet's inner conflict continues as she speculates that the Friar may have given her poison to save his reputation.

8

At this time, some families placed the relative's body in a large, above-ground burial chamber or in a catacomb. The body was not embalmed.

9

*What other fears does Juliet have about the plan if the potion works?* That she will awaken early and be stifled in the foul air or be driven mad by the terror of the place and kill herself.

10

The thought of lying in a stifling tomb close to Tybalt's decomposing corpse horrifies Juliet.

4 **Lady Capulet.**

Goodnight.

Get thee to bed and rest, for thou hast need.

[*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*]5 **Juliet.** Farewell! God knows when we shall meet again.

I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins

That almost freezes up the heat of life.

I'll call them back again to comfort me.

Nurse!—What should she do here?

6 My dismal scene I needs must act alone.

Come, vial.

What if this mixture do not work at all?

Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?

No, no, this shall forbid it. Lie thou there.

[*Laying down a dagger.*]

7 What if it be a poison which the Friar  
Subtly hath ministered<sup>o</sup> to have me dead,  
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored  
Because he married me before to Romeo?  
I fear it is. And yet methinks it should not,  
For he hath still been tried<sup>o</sup> a holy man.

8 How if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
I wake before the time that Romeo  
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.

9 Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,  
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,  
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?  
Or if I live, is it not very like,

The horrible conceit<sup>o</sup> of death and night,  
Together with the terror of the place,  
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,  
Where for this many hundred years the bones

10 Of all my buried ancestors are packed;  
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,<sup>o</sup>  
Lies festering in his shroud; where, as they say,  
At some hours in the night spirits resort—  
Alack, alack, is it not like that I  
So early waking, what with loathsome smells  
And shrieks like mandrakes<sup>o</sup> torn out of the earth,  
That living mortals hearing them run mad?

Oh, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,

25. **ministered**: provided. 29. **tried**: found to be. 37. **conceit**: idea. 42. **green in earth**: newly buried. 47. **mandrakes**: plants with forked roots, which, according to superstition, screamed when dug up.

- 11 Environèd with all these hideous fears, 50  
 12 And madly play with my forefathers' joints,  
 And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,  
 And in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,  
 As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?  
 13 Oh, look! Methinks I see my cousin's ghost 55  
 Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body  
 Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!  
 14 Romeo, I come! This do I drink to thee.

[*She falls upon her bed, within the curtains.*]

#### Scene 4

- 1 [*Hall in Capulet's house. Enter Lady Capulet and Nurse.*]

**Lady Capulet.** Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices, Nurse.

**Nurse.** They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.<sup>o</sup>

[*Enter Capulet.*]

**Capulet.** Come, stir, stir, stir! The second cock hath crowed,  
 The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock.  
 Look to the baked meats, good Angelica.  
 Spare not for cost. 5

- 2 **Nurse.** Go, you cotquean,<sup>o</sup> go,  
 Get you to bed, Faith, you'll be sick tomorrow  
 For this night's watching.

**Capulet.** No, not a whit. What! I have watched ere now 10  
 All night for lesser cause, and ne'er been sick.

**Lady Capulet.** Aye, you have been a mousehunt<sup>o</sup> in your time,  
 But I will watch you from such watching now. [*Exeunt Lady Capulet and Nurse.*]

- 3 **Capulet.** A jealousyhood,<sup>o</sup> a jealousyhood!

[*Enter three or four Servingmen, with spits, and logs, and baskets.*]

Now, fellow, what's there?

**First Servingman.** Things for the cook, sir, but I know not what.

**Capulet.** Make haste, make haste. [*Exit First Servingman.*] Sirrah, fetch drier logs. 15  
 Call Peter, he will show thee where they are.

- 11 Elizabethans were preoccupied with death; Juliet's vision of being driven mad with terror makes common fears concrete.

12 **Imagery.** The idea of Juliet's playing with the bones of her ancestors provides a sort of macabre humor.

13 Juliet imagines that she is seeing Tybalt's ghost.

14 Juliet drinks potion. Her desire to be reunited with Romeo overcomes all fears.

#### Scene 4

1 The domestic bustle, humorous punning, and familiar banter of this scene contrasts with Juliet's desperate thoughts in the previous scene and with the Capulets' lamentations in the next.

2 Nurse and Capulet speak familiarly here. She chides him for meddling in women's affairs; he alludes with good humor to other times he stayed up late.

3 Capulet complains of his wife's jealousy, but he is in a good mood. Very affable when he thinks things are going his way.

2. **pastry:** the room where baking was done. 6. **cotquean** (kõt'kwën): a man who meddles with women's affairs. 11. **mousehunt:** in today's slang, "a wolf." 13. **jealoushood:** jealousy.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this scene, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion: Study Guide 75*



4  
**Irony.** Many activities, lively talk, and sound of music establish household's mood of joyful expectation.

5  
**What does the audience know that the Capulets and their household do not know?** That Juliet will be "dead"; the marriage festivities will turn to mourning.

## Scene 5

1  
 Nurse maintains the comic tone audience has come to expect from her. "Hath set up his rest" means "has determined."

2  
 Nurse's little jokes contrast sadly with her dismay when she finds Juliet seemingly dead.

3  
**Staging.** In performance, it would take several moments before Nurse would realize something is seriously wrong with Juliet.

4  
 Even in moment of greatest distress, Nurse's first thought is to call for a drink.

**Second Servingman.** I have a head, sir, that will found out logs  
 And never trouble Peter for the matter.

**Capulet.** Mass,<sup>o</sup> and well said, ha!

Thou shalt be loggerhead.<sup>o</sup> [*Exit Second Servingman.*] Good faith, 'tis day.  
 4 The County will be here with music straight,  
 For so he said he would. [*Music within.*] I hear him near.  
 Nurse! Wife! What ho! What, Nurse, I say!

20

[*Reenter Nurse.*]

Go waken Juliet, go and trim her up.  
 I'll go and chat with Paris. Hie, make haste,  
 5 Make haste. The bridegroom he is come already.  
 Make haste, I say.

25

[*Exeunt.*]

## Scene 5

[*Juliet's chamber. Curtains drawn around her bed. Enter Nurse.*]

**Nurse.** Mistress! What, mistress! Juliet! Fast,<sup>o</sup> I warrant her, she.

Why, lamb! Why, lady! Fie, you slugabed!  
 Why, love, I say! Madam! Sweetheart! Why, bride!  
 What, not a word? You take your pennyworths now,  
 Sleep for a week; for the next night, I warrant,

5

1 The County Paris hath set up his rest  
 That you shall rest but little. God forgive me,  
 Marry and amen, how sound is she asleep!  
 I needs must wake her. Madam, madam, madam!

2 Aye, let the County take you in your bed,  
 He'll fright you up, i'faith. Will it not be?  
 What, dressed! And in your clothes! And down again!

10

[*Undraws the curtains.*]

3 I must needs wake you. Lady, lady, lady!  
 Alas, alas! Help, help! My lady's dead!  
 Oh, welladay that ever I was born!

15

4 Some aqua vitae, ho! My lord! My lady!

[*Enter Lady Capulet.*]

**Lady Capulet.** What noise is here?

**Nurse.** Oh, lamentable day!

19. **Mass:** by the mass. 20. **loggerhead:** blockhead.

1. **Fast:** fast asleep.



A scene from the 1985 BBC-TV production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Exploring the Subject**

Point out the poignant irony of this scene; the most common image of death and mourning shows youth mourning the death of the aged. Here, the pattern is reversed. This image fully reveals the sadness of the death of a youth, the poignancy of a life ended at its commencement.

#### **Ideas for Writing**

The Nurse is clearly grief-stricken by Juliet's apparent death. Some students might like to write comparison-contrast essays defining the relationship between Juliet and the Nurse and that between Juliet and her mother, basing their compositions on evidence in the play.

**5**  
Capulet's arriving and calling for Juliet to be awakened provides a touch of grim, ironic humor.

**6**  
**Simile.** Capulet compares death to an early frost that kills the field's "sweetest flower" (Juliet).

**7**  
**What knowledge does Friar Laurence's entrance line conceal?** His entrance line conceals his knowledge that Juliet is "dead."

**8**  
Capulet refers to Juliet's impending funeral.

**9**  
**Personification.** Death is presented as the bridegroom, Juliet's husband, Capulet's son-in-law and heir. This **figure of speech** recalls Lady Capulet's angry wish that Juliet be married to her grave.

**10**  
Capulet's harsh temper has made him an unsympathetic figure, but his unrestrained grief for Juliet (whom he was threatening to disown earlier) makes audience feel sorry for him.

**11**  
**Personification.** Lady Capulet personifies "time" as a pilgrim.

**Lady Capulet.** What is the matter?

**Nurse.** Look, look! Oh, heavy day!

**Lady Capulet.** Oh me, oh me! My child, my only life,  
Revive, look up, or I will die with thee.  
Help! help! Call help.

20

[Enter Capulet.]

**5 Capulet.** For shame, bring Juliet forth, her lord is come.

**Nurse.** She's dead, deceased, she's dead, alack the day!

**Lady Capulet.** Alack the day, she's dead, she's dead, she's dead!

**Capulet.** Ha! Let me see her. Out, alas! She's cold.

Her blood is settled and her joints are stiff.

Life and these lips have long been separated.

**6**  
Death lies on her like an untimely frost  
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.

25

**Nurse.** Oh, lamentable day!

**Lady Capulet.** Oh, woeful time!

30

**Capulet.** Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me wail,  
Ties up my tongue and will not let me speak.

[Enter Friar Laurence and Paris with Musicians.]

**7 Friar Laurence.** Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

**8 Capulet.** Ready to go, but never to return.

**9**  
O son, the night before thy wedding day  
Hath death lain with thy wife. See, there she lies,  
Flower as she was, deflowered by him.  
Death is my son-in-law, Death is my heir,  
My daughter he hath wedded. I will die,  
And leave him all—life, living, all is Death's.

35

**10**  
**Paris.** Have I thought long to see this morning's face  
And doth it give me such a sight as this?

**Lady Capulet.** Accurst, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!

**11**  
Most miserable hour that e'er time saw  
In lasting labor of his pilgrimage!  
But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,  
But one thing to rejoice and solace<sup>o</sup> in,  
And cruel death hath catched it from my sight!

45

**Nurse.** Oh, woe! Oh, woeful, woeful, woeful day!  
Most lamentable day, most woeful day,

50

47. **solace:** take comfort.



12 That ever, ever, I did yet behold!  
Oh, day, oh, day, oh, day! Oh, hateful day!  
Never was seen so black a day as this.  
Oh, woeful day, oh, woeful day!

**Paris.** Beguiled, divorced, wronged, spited, slain!  
Most detestable death, by thee beguiled,  
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!  
Oh, love! Oh, life! Not life, but love in death!

13 **Capulet.** Despised, distressed, hated, martyred, killed!  
Uncomfortable° time, why camest thou now  
To murder, murder our solemnity?  
O child! O child! My soul, and not my child!  
Dead art thou! Alack, my child is dead,  
And with my child my joys are buried!

14 **Friar Laurence.** Peace ho, for shame! Confusion's cure lives not

15 In these confusions. Heaven and yourself  
Had part in this fair maid, now Heaven hath all,  
And all the better is it for the maid.  
Your part in her you could not keep from death,  
But Heaven keeps his part in eternal life.  
The most you sought was her promotion,  
For 'twas your heaven she should be advanced.  
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanced  
Above the clouds, as high as Heaven itself?  
Oh, in this love, you love your child so ill  
That you run mad, seeing that she is well.  
She's not well married that lives married long,  
But she's best married that dies married young.  
Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary°  
On this fair corse, and, as the custom is,  
In all her best array bear her to church.  
For though fond nature° bids us all lament,  
Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.°

**Capulet.** All things that we ordained° festival  
Turn from their office to black funeral.

16 Our instruments to melancholy bells,  
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast,  
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,  
Our bridal flowers serve for a buried corse,  
And all things change them to the contrary.

60. **Uncomfortable**: distressing. 76. **well**: that is, in heaven. 79. **rosemary**: Rosemary was used for weddings and funerals. 82. **nature**: human nature. 83. **nature's tears** . . . **merriment**: though natural to weep, there is also reason to rejoice (because Juliet is in heaven). 84. **ordained**: intended for.

12

**Repetition.** As people often do when they are suffering extreme grief, Nurse repeats herself.

13

**Parallelism.** In structure, Capulet's speech reflects Paris' speech. By creating the effect of a refrain, this parallelism emphasizes the grief.

14

Priests' training included learning speeches appropriate for various occasions. The speech of consolation for death was a part of their training.

15

Friar reminds the Capulets that they only shared Juliet with Heaven; now Heaven has her.

16

**Parallelism.** Festival becomes funeral. Capulet's use of opposites recalls Friar's argument that all things are good or ill according to their use.

17

**Heroic couplet.** The strong end rhyme of the heroic couplet gives this warning an appropriate formality.

18

Friar says the Heavens frown on Capulets for "some ill." He may mean their demand that she marry Paris or their feud with the Montagues.

19

Scene contrasts sharply with the now-somber mood of the play.

20

In sixteenth-century productions, Will Kempe played Peter. This scene may have been meant to give Kempe, a famous comic actor, a chance to please the audience with some foolery. He probably danced a jig and improvised some lines.

21

**What purpose does this comic interlude serve?** It relieves tension and provides amusement. It also gives principal actors a break.

22

**Pun.** The characters make puns out of the musical terms. In British musical terminology, a "crotchet" equals a quarter note.

**Friar Laurence.** Sir, go you in, and, madam, go with him.

And go, Sir Paris, everyone prepare  
To follow this fair corse unto her grave.

17 The Heavens do lour<sup>o</sup> upon you for some ill;

18 Move them no more by crossing their high will.

95

[*Exeunt* Capulet, Lady Capulet, Paris, and Friar.]

19 **First Musician.** Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

**Nurse.** Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up,  
For well you know this is a pitiful case.

[*Exit.*]

**Second Musician.** Aye, by my troth, the case<sup>o</sup> may be amended.

20

[*Enter* Peter.]

21 **Peter.** Musicians, oh, musicians, "Heart's ease,<sup>o</sup> heart's ease." Oh, an you will have me live, 100  
play "Heart's ease."

**First Musician.** Why "Heart's ease"?

**Peter.** Oh, musicians, because my heart itself plays "My heart is full of woe." Oh, play me  
some merry dump,<sup>o</sup> to comfort me.

**First Musician.** Not a dump we, 'tis no time to play now. 105

**Peter.** You will not, then?

**First Musician.** No.

**Peter.** I will then give it you soundly.

**First Musician.** What will you give us?

**Peter.** No money, on my faith, but the glee<sup>o</sup>. I will give you the minstrel.<sup>o</sup> 110

**First Musician.** Then will I give you the serving creature.

22 **Peter.** Then will I lay the serving creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets.<sup>o</sup>  
I'll re you, I'll fa you, do you note me?

**First Musician.** An you re us and fa us, you note us.

**Second Musician.** Pray you put up your dagger and put out your wit. 115

**Peter.** Then have at you with my wit! I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my  
iron dagger. Answer me like men:

"When griping grief the heart doth wound  
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,  
Then music with her silver sound——"

120

Why "silver sound"? Why "music with her silver sound"?—What say you, Simon  
Catling?<sup>o</sup>

**First Musician.** Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

**Peter.** Pretty! What say you, Hugh Rebeck?<sup>o</sup>

94. **lour**: frown, scowl. 99. **case**: Two meanings are intended: **case** meaning "instrument box" and **case** meaning "affair."  
100. "Heart's ease": a song. 104. **dump**: sad little song. 110. **gleek**: mock. **give you the minstrel**: beat you. 113.  
**carry no crotchets**: not put up with your whims. 122. **Catling**: catgut string. 124. **Rebeck**: a type of fiddle.

**23 Second Musician.** I say “silver sound” because musicians sound for silver.

**Peter.** Pretty too! What say you, James Soundpost?<sup>o</sup>

**Third Musician.** Faith, I know not what to say.

**Peter.** Oh, I cry you mercy, you are the singer. I will say for you. It is “music with her silver sound” because musicians have no gold for sounding.

“Then music with her silver sound

With speedy help doth lend redress.”

[*Exit.*]

**First Musician.** What a pestilent knave is this same!

**Second Musician.** Hang him, Jack! Come, we’ll in here. Tarry for the mourners, and stay<sup>o</sup> dinner.

[*Exeunt.*]

126. **Soundpost:** part of a violin. 134. **stay:** wait for.

## Reading Check

1. What pretext does Juliet use in order to see Friar Laurence?
2. According to Paris, why has Capulet moved up the date for the wedding?
3. How is Juliet reconciled with her father?
4. What does Juliet plan to do if the potion does not work?
5. Where is Juliet to be buried?

## For Study And Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

**1.** Why do you think the Friar doesn’t tell Paris or the Capulets that Juliet is already married to Romeo?

**2a.** How does Juliet respond to Paris’ gallantries when she meets him at Friar Laurence’s cell? **b.** Is Paris aware of her true feelings for him? **c.** How do you know?

**3a.** What is the Friar’s scheme for reuniting Romeo and Juliet? **b.** How is Romeo to be told of this plan?

**4a.** How and why does Capulet’s mood change during Scene 2? **b.** What important change does he make in the wedding plans? **c.** How will this change affect the timing of the Friar’s plan?

**5a.** What doubts does Juliet have before drinking the Friar’s potion? **b.** What are her fears? **c.** What finally causes her to drink the potion?

**6.** How does the mood of Scene 4 differ from that of Scenes 3 and 5?

**7a.** What argument does the Friar use to comfort Paris, Juliet’s parents, and the Nurse? **b.** What “ill” is he probably referring to in line 94 in Scene 5?

**8.** From the point of view of her parents, the Nurse, and Paris, what must have been the cause of Juliet’s death?

**9.** In Shakespeare’s tragedies there are frequently scenes of comic relief provided by clowns or servants like Peter. The foolery at the end of Act Four depends largely on word-play. What are the two meanings intended for the word **note** in line 113?

125

130

**23**

**Sound for silver:** play for money.

## READING CHECK

1. To confess (p. 553).
2. Capulet thinks Juliet is grieving (p. 556).
3. She kneels and begs his pardon (p. 560).
4. Kill herself to prevent marriage to Paris (p. 562).
5. In the vault (p. 562).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Responses will vary. Capulets, feuding with Montagues, would be enraged by such news.
- 2a. Her clever answers can be interpreted as maidenly modesty or as grief for Tybalt. 2b. Probably not. 2c. He may think she merely conceals love and will express love for him after wedding.
- 3a. Friar gives Juliet potion that will make her appear dead. After she is in Capulet tomb, Romeo can join her, and they can escape. 3b. Laurence will send a letter to Romeo.
- 4a. When Juliet says she is willing to marry Paris, Capulet is delighted with apparent obedience. 4b. Decides wedding will be Wednesday, not Thursday. 4c. Juliet will take potion a day earlier; Romeo will not know to come early.
- 5a. Wonders whether she will ever see Nurse and mother again, and whether drug will work. 5b. Fears Friar has given her poison to save his reputation; fears she will be stifled or go insane from terrors of the tomb. 5c. Desire to rejoin Romeo.
6. In contrast to Scene 3 (desperate planning) and Scene 5 (grief), Scene 4 has bustling excitement, humorous puns, merry preparations.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to analyze how Juliet seems to grow in character during this act. Specific actions should be mentioned to support claims, including how she handles various conflicts.

7a. They and Heaven share Juliet; now Heaven has her.  
7b. Probably speaks of the feud and the parents' forcing Juliet to marry Paris.

8. Responses will vary. They may think a sudden illness or her grief for Tybalt struck her down or that they are being punished for a sin.

9. **Note:** a musical notation; understand.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

1. Answers will vary. *Act One:* Romeo thinks no one can match Rosaline; audience knows he will soon love Juliet. When Romeo and Juliet fall in love, audience knows they are from feuding families.

*Act Three:* Audience knows why Romeo will not fight Tybalt; Mercutio does not. Other examples can be cited.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1a. 'A: he (p. 494).

1b. *Discovered:* revealed (p. 513).

1c. *Happy:* fortunate (p. 544).

1d. *Humor:* fluid (p. 558).

1e. *Hath still been tried:* has always proved to be (p. 562).

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Student paraphrases will vary. The following is an example of a paraphrase of ll. 24–32.

What if this is a poison that the Friar has slyly provided in order to kill me for fear that by this marriage (to Paris), he might be dishonored because he already married me to Romeo? I fear it is poison. Yet I believe it cannot be because the Friar has always proved to be a holy man. What if, when I am laid into the tomb, I wake up before Romeo comes to rescue me? That's a frightening thought.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Writers of tragedy may vary their works' somber tone by including characters or situations that give comic relief. The musicians' scene in Act Four contrasts sharply with the family's grief to show how comic relief can lighten the mood.

*Romeo and Juliet*, especially in Acts One and Two, has more comedy than most tragedies. Ask students to find other comic elements. (They might mention the first street fight, Romeo's pining before meeting Juliet, the masked ball, Queen Mab speech, comic Nurse.)

## Literary Elements

### Dramatic Structure: Dramatic Irony

In Scene 4 we watch Capulet happily making preparations for Juliet's wedding. We know that at any moment he will discover that Juliet is dead. We know something that he does not.

This is an example of **dramatic irony**. We are outside the play, yet we possess special knowledge that would affect the characters if they were aware of it. But, of course there is no way we can affect the action on stage.

Dramatic irony is one of the most powerful tools playwrights have at their disposal. **Dramatic irony heightens suspense**. It involves us in the action and increases our sympathy for the characters.

Look back through the first four acts of the play and locate some moments of dramatic irony. Jot down what piece of information you had that the characters lacked.

1 Try to define the italicized words in the following passages without looking back at the footnotes. Then consult the notes to check your answers.

- a And then my husband—God be with his soul!  
'A was a merry man—took up the child.  
(I, 3, 40–41)  
Therefore pardon me,
- b And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so *discovered*.  
(II, 2, 104–106)  
Tybalt would kill thee,
- c But thou slew'st Tybalt. There art thou *happy* too.  
(III, 3, 137–138)
- d Take thou this vial, being then in bed,  
And this distilled liquor drink thou off,  
When presently through all thy veins shall run  
A cold and drowsy *humor* . . .  
(IV, 1, 93–96)
- e What if it be a poison which the Friar  
Subtly hath ministered to have me dead . . .  
I fear it is; and yet methinks it should not,  
For he hath *still* been tried a holy man.  
(IV, 3, 24–25, 28–29)

## Language and Vocabulary

### Noting Obsolete and Archaic Meanings

Look at the word *and* in this quotation:

Nay, and there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other.

Nowadays we would say *if* rather than *and*. But in Shakespeare's time, *if* was one of the meanings of *and*. The dictionary tells us that *if* is an **obsolete** meaning of *and*. Obsolete means "out of date, no longer used." The word **archaic** also means "out of date." However, there is this difference: an archaic meaning might still be used, but rarely, and only for special purposes.

## Writing About Literature

### Paraphrasing a Passage

Juliet's speech in lines 24–58 of Scene 3 is a soliloquy in which she reveals her thoughts and fears before she drinks the Friar's potion. Write a paraphrase of this passage, restating Juliet's lines in your own words.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate understanding of the **theme** of the play. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 586 gives students practice in identifying and understanding Shakespeare's puns.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students what they would feel if put in the position of Romeo or Juliet. Do they think they could have been thoughtful and patient enough to avert tragedy? If so, how?

## FINAL SCENE

### Act Five

#### Scene 1

[Mantua. A street. Enter Romeo.]

**Romeo.** If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,<sup>o</sup>

My dreams presage<sup>o</sup> some joyful news at hand.

My bosom's lord<sup>o</sup> sits lightly in his throne,

And all this day an unaccustomed spirit

Lifts me above the ground with cheerful thoughts.

1 I dreamed my lady came and found me dead—

Strange dream, that gives a dead man leave to think!—

And breathed such life with kisses in my lips

That I revived and was an emperor.

Ah me, how sweet is love itself possessed

When but love's shadows are so rich in joy!

2 [Enter Balthasar, Romeo's servant, booted.<sup>o</sup>]

News from Verona! How now, Balthasar!

Dost thou not bring me letters from the Friar?

How doth my lady? Is my father well?

3 How fares my Juliet? That I ask again;

For nothing can be ill if she be well.

**Balthasar.** Then she is well, and nothing can be ill.

Her body sleeps in Capels' monument,<sup>o</sup>

And her immortal part with angels lives.

I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,

And presently took post<sup>o</sup> to tell it you.

Oh, pardon me for bringing these ill news,

Since you did leave it for my office,<sup>o</sup> sir.

4 **Romeo.** Is it e'en so? Then I defy you, stars!

Thou know'st my lodging. Get me ink and paper,

And hire post horses. I will hence tonight.

**Balthasar.** I do beseech you, sir, have patience.

Your looks are pale and wild, and do import<sup>o</sup>

Some misadventure.<sup>o</sup>

**Romeo.** Tush, Thou art deceived.

#### Act Five Scene 1

1 Irony. Romeo's dream will come partly true. Juliet will find Romeo dead, but beyond all hope of being revived.

2 Romeo was to receive news from Friar Laurence, but Balthasar is not carrying news from the Friar.

3 Apparently Balthasar knows about Romeo's marriage to Juliet.

4 Characterization. Romeo reacts to news of Juliet's death first with understated shock and then with the explosive "I defy you, stars!" Consistent with his character, he dares fate to do him any worse injury.

1. **flattering truth of sleep**: happy dreams that seemed true. 2. **presage** (prĭ-sāj'): foretell. 3. **bosom's lord**: heart. S.D. **booted**: in riding boots. 18. **monument**: tomb. 21. **took post**: rode fast. 23. **office**: duty. 28. **import**: suggest, imply. 29. **misadventure**: misfortune.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this act, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 77 / Selection Test 43 / Reading Check 42 / Vocabulary Test 26 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 56

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

In Mantua, Romeo's servant Balthasar arrives with the news of Juliet's death. Romeo buys poison illegally and rides hastily to Verona. Meanwhile, Friar Laurence learns that Friar John was detained by a plague quarantine and could not

give Romeo the letter telling of Juliet's plan.

Count Paris, who has been strewing flowers on Juliet's grave, sees Romeo arriving and trying to open Juliet's tomb. Paris challenges Romeo, and the two fight.

## PRESENTATION

Romeo and Juliet, young lovers who have fallen in ecstatic love at first glance, seem to belong in a romantic **comedy**, not a **tragedy**. In a romantic comedy, everything would turn out happily.

But this is not a comedy. Romeo and Juliet are

5

Friar Laurence's messenger has been detained.

6

*Why will it matter that Romeo hears about Juliet's "death" early?* Not knowing Juliet is not dead, he will arrive at her side before she awakens.

7

**Description.** Realistic description of things found in apothecary shops in Shakespeare's time.

8

Green earthen pots are unfired earthenware, inexpensive, but useful only for storage of dry materials.

9

In the popular mind, poisoning was associated with Italy. Since poisoning was a favored method of murder, there was reason for Mantua's law against selling poison.

10

Knowing that Apothecary is poor, Romeo is confident that he can bribe him to sell poison.

11

Forty ducats was a considerable sum at the time. A *ducat* was a gold or silver coin which bore the image of a duke.

Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do.

30

Hast thou no letters to me from the Friar?

5 **Balthasar.** No, my good lord.

6 **Romeo.** No matter. Get thee gone,

And hire those horses. I'll be with thee straight.

[Exit Balthasar.]

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight.

35

Let's see for means—O mischief, thou art swift

To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!

I do remember an apothecary,

And hereabouts he dwells, which late I noted

In tattered weeds,<sup>39</sup> with overwhelming<sup>40</sup> brows,

Culling of simples.<sup>41</sup> Meager were his looks,

40

Sharp misery had worn him to the bones.

7 And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,

An alligator stuffed and other skins

Of ill-shaped fishes; and about his shelves

A beggarly account<sup>42</sup> of empty boxes,

45

8 Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty seeds,

Remnants of packthread and old cakes of roses,<sup>43</sup>

Were thinly scattered, to make up a show.

Noting this penury, to myself I said,

9 "An if a man did need a poison now,

50

Whose sale is present death in Mantua,

10 Here lives a caitiff<sup>44</sup> wretch would sell it him."

Oh, this same thought did but forerun my need,

And this same needy man must sell it me.

As I remember, this should be the house.

55

Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.

What ho! Apothecary!

[Enter Apothecary.]

**Apothecary.** Who calls so loud?

**Romeo.** Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor.

11 Hold, there is forty ducats. Let me have

A dram of poison, such soon-speeding gear<sup>45</sup>

60

As will disperse itself through all the veins,

That the life-weary taker may fall dead,

And that the trunk<sup>46</sup> may be discharged of breath

39. **weeds:** clothes. **overwhelming:** overhanging. 40. **simples:** herbs. 45. **account:** number. 47. **cakes of roses:** dried rose leaves compressed into cakes, used for perfume. 52. **caitiff** (kā'tif): miserable. 60. **gear:** stuff. 63. **trunk:** body.



“star-crossed.” They live in a world tainted by the feud of their parents. In a comedy, minor timing errors would lead to amusing, perhaps embarrassing complications. In this play, life itself depends on timing.

Act Five contains several instances of bad tim-

ing. Romeo does not get Friar Laurence’s letter, thus does not know of the plan; then he hears Juliet is dead. Paris sees Romeo opening the tomb and accosts him. Juliet does not awaken before Romeo kills himself. The Friar arrives too late to save Romeo and then does not stay long

enough to protect Juliet. Finally, the two families make peace too late to save their children. The marriage of Romeo and Juliet does bring the families together, but not as the Friar had hoped.

But what caused so many deaths was more

12 As violently as hasty powder fired  
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.  
65

Apothecary. Such mortal drugs I have, but Mantua's law  
Is death to any he that utters<sup>o</sup> them.

13 Romeo. Art thou so bare and full of wretchedness,  
14 And fear'st to die? Famine is in thy cheeks,  
Need and oppression starveth in thy eyes,  
Contempt and beggary hangs upon thy back,  
The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law.  
The world affords no law to make thee rich,  
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.  
70

Apothecary. My poverty, but not my will, consents.  
75 Romeo. I pay thy poverty and not thy will.

Apothecary. Put this in any liquid thing you will,  
And drink it off, and if you had the strength  
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

15 Romeo. There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls,  
80 16 Doing more murder in this loathsome world  
Than these poor compounds that thou mayst not sell.  
I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.  
Farewell. Buy food, and get thyself in flesh.

17 Come, cordial<sup>o</sup> and not poison, go with me  
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee.  
85 [Exeunt.]

Scene 2

[Friar Laurence's cell.]

Friar John. Holy Franciscan friar! Brother, ho!

[Enter Friar Laurence.]

Friar Laurence. This same should be the voice of Friar John.

Welcome from Mantua. What says Romeo?

1 Or if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

Friar John. Going to find a barefoot brother out,  
One of our order, to associate<sup>o</sup> me  
Here in this city visiting the sick,  
And finding him, the searchers<sup>o</sup> of the town,  
Suspecting that we both were in a house

12

In describing the sort of poison he wants, Romeo lets audience know that the effects will be almost instantaneous.

13

Romeo argues that Apothecary is in such dire straits that he has little to lose and much to gain by breaking law and selling poison.

14

**Figurative language.** Romeo describes signs of extreme poverty in the Apothecary's appearance.

15

Use to answer study question 2b, p. 585.

16

Romeo's argument (gold has done more damage to men's souls than poison) reflects medieval idea of renunciation of the world.

17

**Metaphor.** Poison is a "cordial" in that it will cure his despair.

Scene 2

1

The letter was a vital link in Friar Laurence's plan; there must be convincing reason for it not to have gone to Mantua.

67. **utters:** sells. 85. **cordial:** restorative medicine.  
6. **associate:** accompany. 8. **searchers:** health officers.

than just bad timing, unlucky accident, and the cruel hand of fate. The Prince mentions hatred between the two houses and his own bad judgment in winking at discords. Romeo and Juliet, two young people impatient with life, willfully choose love in defiance of expedience, family

enmities, and the stars.

You may need to remind students that Romeo and Juliet do not *want* to die. They want to be together. Although Shakespeare hints in the Prologue that the lovers are fated to die—they are “star-crossed”—it is partly because of their fatal

flaw, their haste, that they plunge headlong down the path that will end in their deaths. When their worlds seem to be closing in around them, when all hope seems to be gone, they impulsively choose courses of action that lead them to such a dire fate. When Romeo says, “I

**2** Plagues were frequent during this time in England and Europe: to Elizabethan audience, a very plausible reason letter was not delivered. Theaters were frequently closed because of plague.

**3** Friar Laurence’s scheme has fallen apart, and he must try to salvage it. First thought is to rescue Juliet from tomb.

**4** Friar Laurence does not know that Balthasar has told Romeo that Juliet is dead.

### Scene 3

**1** **Staging.** The tomb was probably on the inner stage, while the outer stage represented the churchyard. There may have been some sort of gate in front of the tomb, which Romeo could break open and through which Paris could strew flowers.

**2** **Plot.** Unexpected arrival of Paris is new complication.

**3** **What has Paris instructed his page to do?** To lie down among yew trees, hold his ear to ground, and whistle if he hears anyone coming.

- Where the infectious pestilence<sup>10</sup> did reign, 10  
Sealed up the doors and would not let us forth,  
**2** So that my speed to Mantua there was stayed.  
**Friar Laurence.** Who bare my letter, then, to Romeo?  
**Friar John.** I could not send it—here it is again— 15  
Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,  
So fearful were they of infection.  
**Friar Laurence.** Unhappy fortune! By my brotherhood,  
The letter was not nice,<sup>18</sup> but full of charge<sup>19</sup>  
Of dear import,<sup>20</sup> and the neglecting it 20  
May do much danger. Friar John, go hence.  
Get me an iron crow<sup>21</sup> and bring it straight  
Unto my cell.  
**Friar John.** Brother, I’ll go and bring it thee. [Exit.]  
**3** **Friar Laurence.** Now must I to the monument alone. 25  
Within this three hours will fair Juliet wake.  
**4** She will beshrew<sup>22</sup> me much that Romeo  
Hath had no notice of these accidents.  
But I will write again to Mantua,  
And keep her at my cell till Romeo come.  
Poor living corse, closed in a dead man’s tomb! [Exit.] 30

### Scene 3

- 1** [A churchyard; in it a monument belonging to the Capulets. Enter Paris and his Page, bearing flowers and a torch.]  
**2** **Paris.** Give me thy torch, boy. Hence, and stand aloof.  
Yet put it out, for I would not be seen.  
Under yond yew trees lay thee all along,<sup>3</sup>  
Holding thine ear close to the hollow ground.  
So shall no foot upon the churchyard tread, 5  
Being loose, unfirm, with digging up of graves,  
But thou shalt hear it. Whistle then to me,  
As signal that thou hear’st something approach.  
**3** Give me those flowers. Do as I bid thee, go.  
**Page.** [Aside] I am almost afraid to stand alone 10  
Here in the churchyard, yet I will adventure.

10. **pestilence:** plague. When a case of plague was discovered, all persons in the house were locked in to prevent the disease from spreading. 18. **nice:** trivial. 19. **full of charge:** weighty, important. 20. **dear import:** great importance. 21. **crow:** crowbar. 22. **beshrew:** blame.  
3. **all along:** at full length.

defy you, stars!," his impetuous action only brings him closer to doom. Had he waited for just a day, he would have found that all was not so black, so hopeless. Death is final. Only the living learn from the mistakes of Romeo and Juliet. Students might profit from a discussion of

the other options Romeo and Juliet had. For example, a discussion of communication with parents and friends will help students to explore alternatives. Romeo and Juliet were both desperately in need of help from their parents. They cry out for help with a problem that seems insur-

mountable to them, yet their cries fall on deaf ears, with the possible exception of the Friar. Juliet, in her refusal of Paris, is saying something; but her message is too cryptic to be understood by her father. He should have been more perceptive, but she also might have been more honest.

4 **Paris.** Sweet flower, with flowers thy bridal bed I strew—

Oh, woe! Thy canopy is dust and stones—

Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,

Or, wanting that, with tears distilled by moans.

The obsequies<sup>o</sup> that I for thee will keep

15

5 Nightly shall be to strew thy grave and weep.

[*The Page whistles.*]

The boy gives warning something doth approach.

What cursèd foot wanders this way tonight,

6 To cross<sup>o</sup> my obsequies and true love's rite?

20

7 What, with a torch! Muffle<sup>o</sup> me, night, awhile.

[*Retires.*]

[*Enter Romeo and Balthasar, with a torch, mattock,<sup>o</sup> etc.*]

**Romeo.** Give that mattock and the wrenching iron.

8 Hold, take this letter. Early in the morning

See thou deliver it to my lord and father.

Give me the light. Upon thy life, I charge thee,

Whate'er thou hear'st or seest, stand all aloof,

And do not interrupt me in my course.

25

9 Why I descend into this bed of death

Is partly to behold my lady's face,

But chiefly to take thence from her dead finger

A precious ring, a ring that I must use

In dear employment.<sup>o</sup> Therefore hence, be gone.

But if thou, jealous,<sup>o</sup> dost return to pry

In what I farther shall intend to do,

By Heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint

And strew this hungry churchyard with thy limbs.

The time and my intents are savage-wild,

More fierce and more inexorable far

Than empty<sup>o</sup> tigers or the roaring sea.

30

**Balthasar.** I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

40

**Romeo.** So shalt thou show me friendship. Take thou that. [*Giving money*]

Live, and be prosperous, and farewell, good fellow.

10 **Balthasar.** [*Aside*] For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout.

His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt.<sup>o</sup>

[*Retires.*]

**Romeo.** Thou detestable maw,<sup>o</sup> thou womb of death,

45

Gorged with the dearest morsel<sup>o</sup> of the earth,

16. **obsequies** (ob'sə-kwēz): funeral rites. 20. **cross**: thwart, interrupt. 21. **Muffle**: hide. S.D. **mattock**: a tool like a pick, with a broad end. 32. **in dear employment**: for an important purpose. 33. **jealous**: curious. 39. **empty**: hungry. 44. **doubt**: suspect. 45. **maw**: stomach.

4

**Imagery.** Flowers have been associated with love and with Juliet. Now image takes on new meaning.

5

**Why has Paris come to Juliet's grave?** To mourn Juliet and to strew flowers on her grave.

6

**Characterization.** Paris' reason for visiting the tomb is convincing. His sorrow for Juliet maintains him as a sympathetic figure.

7

In a production, Paris will probably remain in view of the audience when he retires.

8

Romeo has written a letter for Balthasar to deliver to Montague.

9

Balthasar, getting horses while Romeo bought poison, does not know his master's plans. Romeo continues to conceal his intent.

10

**Aside.** Balthasar tells audience he suspects Romeo's intentions. By disobeying Romeo's order, he becomes witness to what happens at tomb.



Any discomfort at his initial displeasure would still have been preferable to the tragedy to which silence and deception lead.

In the literary sense, we know that the lovers were fated to die. The play would not have survived as the most popular drama in modern

history, would not have brought tears to people of all ages for more than three hundred years, had Romeo and Juliet lived to a ripe old age and had a blissful life. To mention that there are other choices available to young people, that Romeo's and Juliet's deaths result from impul-

sive and shortsighted actions, does not detract from the literary merit of the play.

11

**Conflict.** Paris, who does not know Romeo and Juliet are married, suspects Romeo has come to desecrate tomb, perhaps even to work black magic against the Capulets. Feud continues to influence action of the play.

12

Romeo does not recognize Paris in the dark. Romeo desperately tries to avoid a fight.

13

Page's role is very important because all Capulets and Montagues will be called on stage as play draws to a close.

14

Romeo is generous to his rival. Recalling that Balthasar had mentioned Paris' desire to marry Juliet, Romeo obeys Paris' request to lay him in tomb with Juliet.

Thus, I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,  
And in despite° I'll cram thee with more food.

[*Opens the tomb.*]

**Paris.** This is that banished haughty Montague  
That murdered my love's cousin, with which grief  
It is supposed the fair creature died,  
And here is come to do some villainous shame  
To the dead bodies. I will apprehend° him.

50

[*Comes forward.*]

Stop thy unhallowed toil, vile Montague!  
Can vengeance be pursued further than death?  
Condemnèd villain, I do apprehend thee.  
Obey, and go with me, for thou must die.

55

**Romeo.** I must indeed, and therefore came I hither.

12 Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man.  
Fly hence and leave me. Think upon these gone,  
Let them affright thee. I beseech thee, youth,  
Put not another sin upon my head,  
By urging me to fury. Oh, be gone!  
By Heaven, I love thee better than myself,  
But I come hither armed against myself.  
Stay not, be gone. Live, and hereafter say  
A madman's mercy bid thee run away.

60

65

**Paris.** I do defy thy conjurations°  
And apprehend thee for a felon here.

**Romeo.** Wilt thou provoke me? Then have at thee, boy!

70

13 **Page.** Oh, Lord, they fight! I will go call the watch.

[*Exit.*]

**Paris.** Oh, I am slain! [*Falls.*] If thou be merciful,  
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet.

[*Dies.*]

**Romeo.** In faith, I will. Let me peruse this face.

14 Mercutio's kinsman, noble County Paris!  
What said my man, when my betossèd° soul  
Did not attend° him as we rode? I think  
He told me Paris should have married Juliet.  
Said he not so? Or did I dream it so?  
Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,  
To think it was so? Oh, give me thy hand,

75

80

48. **despite:** scorn, defiance. 53. **apprehend:** arrest. 68. **conjurations:** spells. 76. **betossèd:** upset. 77. **attend:** listen to.

One writ with me in sour misfortune's book!  
 I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave—  
 A grave? Oh, no, a lantern,<sup>84</sup> slaughtered youth;  
 For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes  
 This vault a feasting presence<sup>85</sup> full of light.  
 Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interred.

85

[*Laying Paris in the monument.*]

How oft when men are at the point of death  
 Have they been merry! Which their keepers call  
 A lightning<sup>90</sup> before death. Oh, how may I  
 Call this a lightning? [*Sees Juliet.*] O my love! My wife!  
 Death, that hath sucked the honey of thy breath,  
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.  
 Thou art not conquered; beauty's ensign<sup>91</sup> yet  
 Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,  
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there.  
 Tybalt, liest thou there in thy bloody sheet?  
 Oh, what more favor can I do to thee  
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain  
 To sunder<sup>92</sup> his that was thine enemy?  
 Forgive me, Cousin! Ah, dear Juliet,  
 Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe  
 That unsubstantial death is amorous,  
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps  
 Thee here in the dark to be his paramour?  
 For fear of that, I still will stay with thee,  
 And never from this palace of dim night  
 Depart again. Here, here will I remain  
 With worms that are thy chambermaids. Oh, here  
 Will I set up my everlasting rest,  
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious<sup>93</sup> stars  
 From this world-wearyed flesh. Eyes, look your last!  
 Arms, take your last embrace! And lips, O you  
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss  
 A dateless<sup>94</sup> bargain to engrossing<sup>95</sup> death!  
 Come, bitter conduct,<sup>96</sup> come unsavory guide!  
 Thou desperate pilot,<sup>97</sup> now at once run on  
 The dashing rocks thy seasick weary bark.<sup>98</sup>

90

95

100

105

110

115

### 15

May seem odd that Juliet lies unburied on a slab, but Friar had termed this "the manner of our country" (Act Four, Scene 1).

### 16

**Personification.** Throughout this speech, Romeo speaks of death as a person. Here, Death is a voracious creature that has consumed Juliet.

### 17

**Irony.** In observing that Juliet looks as though she were alive, Romeo has unknowingly stumbled on truth.

### 18

**Suspense.** Romeo does not know what the audience knows: Juliet will soon awaken. As Romeo talks, the audience must still hope she will awaken in time to save him.

### 19

Death is personified as a monster who would make Juliet his mistress.

### 20

Another reference to the stars that have "crossed" the lives of these lovers.

### 21

Romeo addresses eyes, arms, and legs as though they might answer.

84. **lantern:** dome with windows that gives additional light to a hall. 86. **a feasting presence:** a hall lit brightly for a feast. 90. **lightning:** brightening. 94. **ensign:** flag. 100. **sunder:** cut off. 111. **inauspicious:** unlucky. 115. **dateless:** unending. **engrossing:** self-encompassing. 116. **conduct:** guide. 117. **desperate pilot:** Romeo. 118. **bark:** ship.

22

**Catastrophe.** The poison works as Apothecary promised. Romeo dies only moments before Friar Laurence arrives and Juliet awakes—the unhappiest example of bad timing in the play.

23

Since Friar Laurence has no reason to expect to find Romeo at the tomb, the information given by Balthasar is important.

24

Friar Laurence feels an intense foreboding of disaster.

25

By claiming to have dreamed of the fight between Romeo and Paris, Balthasar tries to avoid being witness to death of Paris.

26

Since the Friar bears heavy responsibility for fate of the young lovers, it is poetic justice that he discover the bodies of Romeo and Paris and be present when Juliet awakes.

27

**Irony.** Juliet expects the Friar to bring her good (comforting) news; now he must comfort her for the death of Romeo.

22 Here's to my love! [*Drinks the poison.*] O true apothecary!  
Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.

[*Dies.*] 120

[*Enter, at the other end of the churchyard, Friar Laurence, with a lantern, crowbar, and spade.*]

**Friar Laurence.** Saint Francis be my speed!<sup>121</sup> How oft tonight  
Have my old feet stumbled<sup>122</sup> at graves! Who's there?

**Balthasar.** Here's one a friend, and one that knows you well.

**Friar Laurence.** Bliss be upon you! Tell me, good my friend.

What torch is yond that vainly lends his light

125

To grubs and eyeless skulls? As I discern,

It burneth in the Capels' monument.

**Balthasar.** It doth so, holy sir, and there's my master,  
One that you love.

23 **Friar Laurence.** Who is it?

**Balthasar.** Romeo.

**Friar Laurence.** How long hath he been there?

**Balthasar.** Full half an hour.

130

**Friar Laurence.** Go with me to the vault.

**Balthasar.** I dare not, sir.

My master knows not but I am gone hence,

And fearfully did menace me with death

If I did stay to look on his intents.

24 **Friar Laurence.** Stay, then, I'll go alone. Fear comes upon me—  
Oh, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

135

25 **Balthasar.** As I did sleep under this yew tree here,  
I dreamed my master and another fought,  
And that my master slew him.

**Friar Laurence.** Romeo! [*Advances.*]

Alack, alack, what blood is this which stains

140

The stony entrance of this sepulcher?

What mean these masterless and gory swords

To lie discolored by this place of peace?

[*Enters the tomb.*] Romeo! Oh, pale! Who else? What, Paris too?

26 And steeped in blood? Ah, what an unkind hour  
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!  
The lady stirs.

145

[*Juliet wakes.*]

27 **Juliet.** O comfortable<sup>123</sup> Friar! Where is my lord?

121. **speed:** help. 122. **stumbled:** Stumbling was considered an evil omen. 148. **comfortable:** comforting.



I do remember well where I should be,  
And there I am. Where is my Romeo? 150

28 [Noise within.]

**Friar Laurence.** I hear some noise, Lady, come from the nest  
Of death, contagion, and unnatural sleep.  
A greater power than we can contradict  
Hath thwarted our intents. Come, come away.  
Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead,  
And Paris, too, Come, I'll dispose of thee 155  
Among a sisterhood of holy nuns.  
Stay not to question, for the watch is coming.  
30 Come, go, good Juliet, I dare no longer stay.

**Juliet.** Go, get thee hence, for I will not away. [Exit Friar Laurence.] 160  
What's here? A cup, closed in my true love's hand?  
Poison, I see, hath been his timeless° end.  
O churl! Drunk all, and left no friendly drop  
To help me after? I will kiss thy lips—  
Haply° some poison yet doth hang on them 165  
To make me die with a restorative. [Kisses him.]  
31 Thy lips are warm.

**First Watchman.** [Within] Lead, boy. Which way?

32 **Juliet.** Yea, noise? Then I'll be brief. O happy dagger!

[Snatching Romeo's dagger.]

This is thy sheath. [Stabs herself.] There rust, and let me die. 170  
[Falls on Romeo's body, and dies.]

[Enter Watch, with the Page of Paris.]

**Page.** This is the place—there, where the torch doth burn.

**First Watchman.** The ground is bloody. Search about the churchyard.

Go, some of you, whoever you find attach.°

33 Pitiful sight! Here lies the County slain,  
And Juliet bleeding, warm, and newly dead. 175  
Who here hath lain this two days buried.  
Go tell the Prince. Run to the Capulets,  
Raise up the Montagues. Some others search.  
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,

28

Offstage noise creates sense of urgency and prepares audience for entrances of the watch, Prince, and others. Also makes the Friar flee, leaving Juliet alone to fulfill prediction made in the Prologue.

29

*What does the Friar ask Juliet to do?* To let him take her to a sisterhood of nuns.

30

Friar Laurence has much explaining to do; he has good reason to run away when he hears guards coming.

31

Juliet must realize that Romeo's lips are warm because he has just died. This line must be one of most anguished in the play.

32

**Characterization.** Without hesitation, Juliet decides to join Romeo in death. This and other hasty actions (marrying Romeo on short acquaintance, taking a fearful potion to be reunited with him) reveal her impulsive temperament.

33

**Plot.** Juliet's death completes catastrophe but does not complete the dramatic action. Montagues and Capulets must learn of the secret marriage, and much more must be revealed. Rest of the play consists of resolution.

162. timeless: untimely. 165. Haply: perhaps. 173. attach: arrest.

**34**  
Why does the First Watchman order Balthasar and the Friar held? They have been found near the scene and are thus under suspicion.

**35**  
Diction. The Prince establishes his authority by referring to himself in the plural, the regal first-person. As the supreme power in Verona, he will reconcile the Capulets and Montagues.

**36**  
The three bodies, all freshly killed, make a horrible and inexplicable sight to those crowding around the tomb.

**37**  
Shakespeare, the skillful craftsman, has insured that witnesses are available to explain the action.

**38**  
Figurative language. Capulet speaks of the dagger as if it had stabbed Juliet by mistake. This personification tells us what Capulet wants to think and intensifies emotion.

But the true ground of all these piteous woes  
We cannot without circumstance° descry°.

180

[Reenter some of the Watch, with Balthasar.]

**Second Watchman.** Here's Romeo's man. We found him in the churchyard.  
**First Watchman.** Hold him in safety till the Prince come hither.

[Reenter Friar Laurence, and another Watchman.]

**Third Watchman.** Here is a friar that trembles, sighs, and weeps.  
We took this mattock and this spade from him  
As he was coming from this churchyard's side.

185

**34 First Watchman.** A great suspicion. Stay the friar too.

[Enter the Prince and Attendants.]

**Prince.** What misadventure is so clearly up  
**35** That calls our person from our morning rest?

[Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, and others.]

**Capulet.** What should it be that they so shriek abroad?  
**Lady Capulet.** The people in the street cry Romeo,  
Some Juliet, and some Paris, and all run  
With open outcry toward our monument.

190

**Prince.** What fear is this which startles in our ears?  
**36 First Watchman.** Sovereign, here lies the County Paris slain,  
And Romeo dead, and Juliet, dead before,  
Warm and new-killed.

195

**Prince.** Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.  
**37 First Watchman.** Here is a friar, and slaughtered Romeo's man,  
With instruments upon them fit to open  
These dead men's tombs.

200

**Capulet.** Oh, heavens! O wife, look how our daughter bleeds!  
**38** This dagger hath mista'en, for, lo, his house°  
Is empty on the back of Montague,  
And it missheathèd in my daughter's bosom!

205

**Lady Capulet.** Oh me! This sight of death is as a bell°  
That warns my old age to a sepulcher.

181. **circumstance:** knowledge of the facts. **descry:** understand. 203. **house:** here, sheath. 206. **bell:** Church bells tolled for the dead.

[Enter Montague and others.]

**Prince.** Come, Montague, for thou art early up,  
To see thy son and heir more early down.

**39 Montague.** Alas, my liege, my wife is dead tonight, 210  
Grief of my son's exile hath stopped her breath.  
What further woe conspires against mine age?

**Prince.** Look, and thou shalt see.

**40 Montague.** O thou untaught! What manners is in this, 215  
To press before thy father to a grave?

**Prince.** Seal up the mouth of outrage<sup>o</sup> for a while  
Till we can clear these ambiguities  
And know their spring,<sup>o</sup> their head, their true descent.  
And then will I be general of your woes,

**41** And lead you even to death. Meantime forbear, 220  
And let mischance be slave to patience.  
Bring forth the parties of suspicion.<sup>o</sup>

**42 Friar Laurence.** I am the greatest, able to do least,  
Yet most suspected, as the time and place  
Doth make against me, of this direful murder. 225  
And here I stand, both to impeach<sup>o</sup> and purge<sup>o</sup>  
Myself condemnèd and myself excused.

**Prince.** Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

**43 Friar Laurence.** I will be brief, for my short date of breath<sup>o</sup> 230  
Is not so long as is a tedious tale.

Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet,  
And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife.  
I married them, and their stol'n marriage day  
Was Tybalt's doomsday, whose untimely death  
Banished the new-made bridegroom from this city, 235  
For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pined.

You, to remove that siege of grief from her,  
Betróthed and would have married her perforce  
To County Paris. Then comes she to me,  
And with wild looks bid me devise some mean 240

To rid her from this second marriage,  
Or in my cell there would she kill herself.  
Then gave I her, so tutored by my art,  
A sleeping potion, which so took effect  
As I intended, for it wrought on her 245

216. **mouth of outrage:** the tomb where violent deeds were done. At this point the curtains at the back of the stage would be closed to hide the bodies. 218. **spring:** source. 222. **parties of suspicion:** suspected persons. 226. **impeach:** accuse. **purge:** clear (of guilt). 229. **my short date of breath:** the little life left me.

**39**

Sorrows pile up. Montague has lost both his wife and his son in the same night.

**40**

Montague speaks roughly, chiding Romeo for his poor manners in dying before his father. This understated response conveys intense grief and emphasizes the absurd waste of Romeo's life.

**41**

*What is the Prince trying to do?* To calm the shocked and grieving families until something definite is known about the deaths.

**42**

Friar is saying that he is most suspected because of where he was caught but is the least able to harm anyone. He will tell how he is guilty, how he is innocent.

**43**

Friar summarizes what has happened. He says nothing that is new to the audience, but his revelations are shocking for those on stage.



44

Play's events have been many and confusing. Friar's recapitulation brings events into clear focus and helps to bring the play's action to a resolution.

45

Suspecting that some may not believe his amazing story, Friar names Nurse as a corroborating witness.

46

**Characterization.** Friar accuses himself and accepts responsibility. His humility and sorrow are completely in character. Although it was his plan that miscarried, he retains audience's respect.

47

Both Balthasar and Page are important witnesses. They speak honestly and to the point, telling what happened at the tomb before the Friar arrived.

The form of death. Meantime I writ to Romeo  
That he should hither come as this<sup>o</sup> dire night,  
To help to take her from her borrowed<sup>o</sup> grave,  
Being the time the potion's force should cease.  
But he which bore my letter, Friar John,  
Was stayed by accident, and yesternight  
Returned my letter back. Then all alone  
At the prefixed hour of her waking  
Came I to take her from her kindred's vault,  
Meaning to keep her closely<sup>o</sup> at my cell  
Till I conveniently could send to Romeo.  
But when I came, some minute ere the time  
Of her awaking, here untimely lay  
The noble Paris and true Romeo dead.  
She wakes, and I entreated her come forth,  
And bear this work of Heaven with patience.  
But then a noise did scare me from the tomb,  
And she too desperate would not go with me,  
But, as it seems, did violence on herself.  
All this I know, and to the marriage  
Her nurse is privy.<sup>o</sup> And if aught in this  
Miscarried by my fault, let my old life  
Be sacrificed some hour before his time  
Unto the rigor of severest law.

250

255

260

265

**Prince.** We still<sup>o</sup> have known thee for a holy man.

270

Where's Romeo's man? What can he say in this?

47 **Balthasar.** I brought my master news of Juliet's death,  
And then in post he came from Mantua  
To this same place, to this same monument.  
This letter he early bid me give his father,  
And threatened me with death, going in the vault,  
If I departed not and left him there.

275

**Prince.** Give me the letter, I will look on it.

Where is the County's page, that raised the watch?  
Sirrah, what made<sup>o</sup> your master in this place?

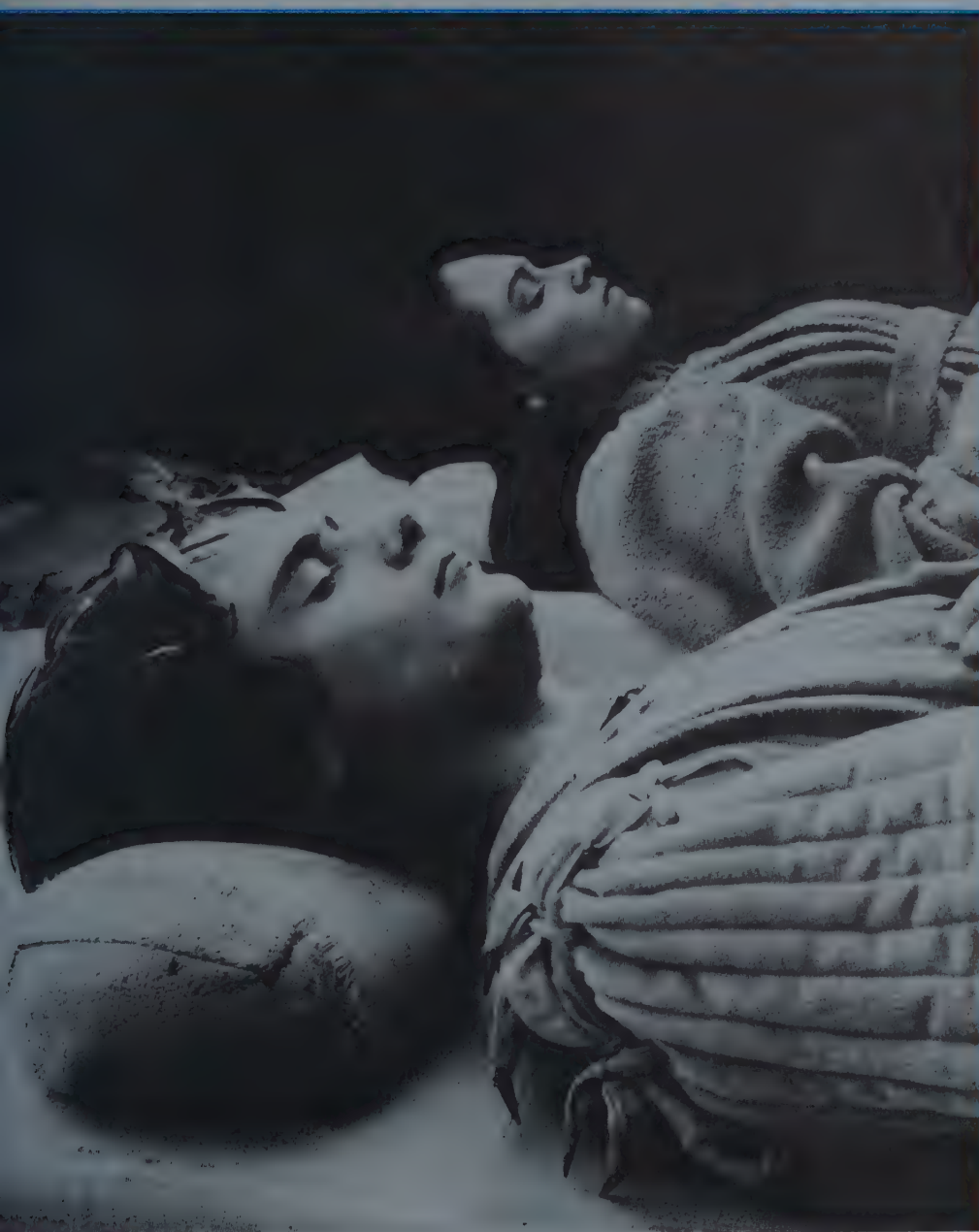
280

**Page.** He came with flowers to strew his lady's grave,  
And bid me stand aloof, and so I did.  
Anon comes one with light to ope the tomb,  
And by and by my master drew on him,  
And then I ran away to call the watch.

285

**Prince.** This letter doth make good the Friar's words,

247. **as this:** this same. 248. **borrowed:** temporary. 255. **closely:** secretly. 266. **is privy:** shares the secret. 270. **still:** always. 280. **made:** did.



A scene from a 1968 film version of *Romeo and Juliet*.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In this picture, the bodies are laid out side by side in serene repose. The students might be interested in talking about how they envisioned the scenes of this act as they read the play.

### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to write reviews of the play. Most will not be familiar with the style and content of play reviews, so it would be useful to suggest they read several reviews prior to writing their own. Ask students to make outlines of the play's principal events and turning points—those which occur both by design and by chance—before they begin writing. You might want to remind them of Friar Laurence's speech in the final act, which may provide them with a useful starting point. Emphasize that a review is more than a summary and directs itself to numerous aspects of a play. Before beginning, students may want to discuss the elements they have found common to reviews.

48

*Whom does the Prince blame?*

Capulet and Montague for their hatred; himself for "winking at . . . discords."

49

**Theme.** The hatred of the Montagues and the Capulets has caused death of many, but it could not kill Romeo and Juliet's love. In a tragically ironic reversal, love has killed hatred, but at enormous cost.

50

The feud is ended, both sides suffering the consequences of their enmity. The Prince, by not doing more to end the feud, has been punished by the loss of his kinsmen Mercutio and Paris.

51

United in their sorrow, Capulet and Montague make peace. Montague promises to raise a statue to honor Juliet; Capulet, a statue to honor Romeo.

52

The deaths of Romeo and Juliet could have caused the feud to break out with renewed ferocity, but such a conclusion would have been against Elizabethan dramatic tradition. Rather, the ending is one of sadness and reconciliation.

Their course of love, the tidings of her death.

And here he writes that he did buy a poison

Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal

Came to this vault to die and lie with Juliet.

290

48

Where be these enemies? Capulet! Montague!

49

See what a scourge<sup>o</sup> is laid upon your hate

That Heaven finds means to kill your joys with love!

And I, for winking<sup>o</sup> at your discords too,

50

Have lost a brace<sup>o</sup> of kinsmen. All are punished.

295

51

**Capulet.** O Brother Montague, give me thy hand.

This is my daughter's jointure,<sup>o</sup> for no more

Can I demand.

**Montague.**

But I can give thee more.

For I will raise her statue in pure gold,

That whiles Verona by that name is known

300

There shall no figure at such rate<sup>o</sup> be set

As that of true and faithful Juliet.

**Capulet.**

As rich shall Romeo's by his lady's lie,

Poor sacrifices of our enmity!

52

**Prince.** A glooming<sup>o</sup> peace this morning with it brings,

305

The sun for sorrow will not show his head.

Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things.

Some shall be pardoned and some punished.

For never was a story of more woe

Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.

[*Exeunt.*]

310

292. **scourge:** punishment. 294. **winking:** shutting my eyes. 295. **brace:** pair. 297. **jointure:** wedding gift. 301. **rate:** value. 305. **glooming:** cloudy, overcast.



## Reading Check

1. Who brings Romeo the news of Juliet's death?
2. Why does Romeo have to bribe the Apothecary?
3. What messenger fails to deliver Friar Laurence's letter to Romeo?
4. What reason does Romeo give Balthasar for entering the Capulets' tomb?
5. What does Romeo ask Balthasar to deliver to his father?
6. When Paris sees Romeo in the tomb, what does he assume?
7. Whose forgiveness does Romeo ask before he kills himself?
8. What suspects do the watchmen bring before Prince Escalus?
9. Which of the Prince's kinsmen have died?
10. How does Montague plan to honor Juliet?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Play

1. When Romeo says "I defy you, stars!" he challenges fate to do its worst. How is his reaction at this point similar to some of his reactions earlier in the play?

2a. Why does Romeo think he will be able to convince the Apothecary to break the law of Mantua? b. What substance does Romeo consider to be more harmful than poison and why?

3. What circumstances kept Friar John from delivering the letter to Romeo?

4a. Why does Paris come to Juliet's tomb? b. What effect does Paris' last request have on Romeo?

5. Why does the Friar run away, leaving Juliet behind?

6a. How are Juliet's last actions in the play typical of her? b. Where else has she acted with such decisiveness?

7a. What does the Prince mean when he says "all are punished"? b. What does he see as his own mistake?

8. What good has come from the deaths of Romeo and Juliet?

### READING CHECK

1. Balthasar (p. 571).
2. Law forbids selling poison (p. 572).
3. Friar John (p. 573).
4. To get ring (p. 575).
5. A letter (p. 575).
6. That he has come to wreak vengeance on the dead (p. 576).
7. Tybalt's (p. 577).
8. Friar Laurence and Balthasar (p. 580).
9. Mercutio and Paris (p. 584).
10. With a statue of her (p. 584).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Romeo has defied fate by going to the Capulets' ball, wooing Juliet, marrying her secretly, avenging Mercutio's death, and returning to Juliet.

2a. He knows the Apothecary is poor, hungry. 2b. Gold: it poisons men's souls, causes more murders than poison.

3. Stopped by officers enforcing a plague quarantine.

4a. To strew flowers and to mourn. 4b. He feels sad, knowing Paris, too, loved Juliet and has suffered great misfortune. Romeo obeys Paris' request to put him in Juliet's vault.

5. He hears guards coming.

6a. Very loving and loyal, she won't leave Romeo's body; determined and impulsive, she stabs herself without hesitation. 6b. At the ball, on her balcony, at her wedding to Romeo; she refuses to marry Paris.

7a. Capulets and Montagues have lost their only children, and Prince has lost two kinsmen, Mercutio and Paris. 7b. His ignoring the discord between the families.

8. The families make peace.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to state the **theme** of the play and to show how the outcome of the play supports that theme.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

**1a.** *Light*: in weight; what gives illumination.

**1b.** *Soles . . . soul*: of shoes; heart.

**1c.** *Discords*: fights; badly played music.

**1d.** *Ground*: earth; basis or reason.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

If Romeo did not think Juliet dead, there would be no tragedy. He would not go to the tomb early or duel with Paris. Juliet would wake up to find either Romeo or the Friar waiting. Students can find other instances of dramatic irony.

## FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

**1a.** Answers will vary. **1b.** Happy end might imply escaping consequences of deeds, or that love conquers all; would be artistically wrong unless characters, situations changed.

**2a.** Rosaline doesn't return love because Romeo's in love with love. Romeo forgets Rosaline when he meets Juliet. He loves Juliet deeply; endures danger for her. **2b.** At end, he reveals understanding by honoring Paris' request. (See *Teacher's Manual*, p. 257.)

**3.** Accept plausible interpretations and support. From first, Juliet shows strong will, does what she wants, accepts price. (See *Teacher's Manual*, p. 257.)

**4.** Events go against them, but they make hasty choices that contribute to ill fate.

**5a.** Paris, Mercutio, Romeo, and Juliet don't seem to merit death. Capulets and Montagues merit penalty, but loss of children is harsh. Prince, Friar, Nurse, and others mean well but err; must live with regrets. It is hard to say who should be punished and how. **5b.** We cannot know how survivors are punished, but all are saddened.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Students might enjoy watching one of the film versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, and, if time permits, you might have students watch the film version of the musical *West Side Story*, an adaptation of the Romeo and Juliet story set in New

York City.

Ask students if they have seen any movies or read any stories in which young people from feuding social groups or families fall in love. Have the students compare those plots with that of *Romeo and Juliet*.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Understanding Puns

A **pun** is a play on words. Shakespeare was fond of puns and his plays are full of them, even in serious moments.

Sometimes a pun plays on different meanings of a single word. When Mercutio refers to himself as a "grave man," he puns on two meanings of *grave*: "serious" and "ready for the grave." Sometimes a pun plays on different words that sound alike but that have different meanings. *Romeo and Juliet* begins with a triple pun on the word *collier* (coal vendor), which sounds like *choler* (anger) and *collar* (hangman's noose).

**1** Identify the puns in the following quotations and state what different meanings are intended for each one.

**a** Give me a torch. I am not for this ambling.  
Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

(I, 4, 11–12)

**b** Not I, believe me. You have dancing shoes  
With nimble soles. I have a soul of lead  
So stakes me to the ground I cannot move.

(I, 4, 14–16)

**c** . . . What, dost thou make us minstrels? An thou  
make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but  
discords.

(III, 1, 35–36)

**d** We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,  
But the true ground of all these piteous woes  
We cannot without circumstance descry.

(V, 3, 179–181)

## Writing About Literature

### ▶ Noting Shakespeare's Use of Irony

**Irony** contrasts what is real and what appears to be real. In dramatic irony, the contrast depends upon the difference between what a character believes and what the audience knows to be true. Find instances of irony in the final act of *Romeo and Juliet*. How do the ironic events affect the outcome of the play?

## For Further Discussion

**1.** From 1660 to 1845, *Romeo and Juliet* was most often performed with an altered ending in which the young lovers did not die, but lived happily ever after. **a.** Would you have preferred the play to end happily? **b.** How does a happy ending alter the meaning of the play?

**2a.** Is Romeo's love for Rosaline different from his love for Juliet? **b.** Does Romeo's character change during the play? Cite specific evidence to defend your answer.

**3.** Does Juliet develop a will of her own during the play, or does she merely shift her obedience from her parents to Romeo? Support your answer with quotations.

**4.** As the play is presented, do you think that Romeo and Juliet are responsible for what happens, or are they just the playthings of fate?

**5.** At the end of the play, Prince Escalus announces that "all are punished." **a.** Does everyone deserve to be punished? **b.** Does anyone get off too easily? Discuss.

▶ Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to enhance their skills in critical thinking by analyzing the language and structure of a dramatic speech, a **soliloquy** from *Romeo and Juliet*.

## PRESENTATION

In this unit, students have learned the skills needed to read **drama** for pleasure and understanding. This section offers practice in interpreting a **soliloquy** from *Romeo and Juliet*.

Incomplete, rambling sentences and sudden

exclamations reveal Juliet's mental state. The speech's surface disorder masks careful design. Fears about the potion and the Friar build to more abstract fears: What if she awakens alone? Goes mad? Note how her hysteria is created through a series of questions she asks herself.

# DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

## Interpreting a Dramatic Speech

A soliloquy is a speech in which a character, alone on stage, reveals his or her thoughts or feelings to the audience. Juliet's soliloquy in Scene 3 of Act Four occurs at a critical point in the play. She is desperate to avoid marriage to Paris but hesitates to take the Friar's potion.

- 1 What does the speech reveal about Juliet's state of mind: her doubts, her fears, the conflicts she
- 2 faces, and her resolution? How does the speech build in emotional intensity as she imagines the horrors of awaking in her own tomb?

What if this mixture do not work at all?  
Shall I be married then tomorrow morning?

No, no, this shall forbid it. Lie thou there.  
[Laying down a dagger.]

What if it be a poison which the Friar  
Subtly hath ministered to have me dead,  
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonored

Because he married me before to Romeo?  
I fear it is. And yet methinks it should not,  
For he hath still been tried a holy man.  
How if, when I am laid into the tomb,  
I wake before the time that Romeo  
Come to redeem me? There's a fearful point.

Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,  
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air  
breathes in,  
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?

Or if I live, is it not very like,  
The horrible conceit of death and night,  
Together with the terror of the place,  
As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,  
Where for this many hundred years the bones

Of all my buried ancestors are packed;  
Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth,  
Lies festered in his shroud; where, as they say,

At some hours in the night spirits resort—

Alack, alack, is it not like that I  
So early waking, what with loathsome smells

And shrieks like mandrakes' torn out of the earth,

That living mortals hearing them run mad?

Oh, if I wake, shall I not be distraught,  
Environed with all these hideous fears,  
And madly play with my forefathers' joints,

And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud,

And in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,

As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?

Oh, look! Methinks I see my cousin's ghost

Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body  
Upon a rapier's point. Stay, Tybalt, stay!  
Romeo, I come! This do I drink to thee.

## INTERPRETING A DRAMATIC SPEECH

If students wrote prose paraphrases of this speech for the **Writing About Literature** activity following Act Four, they will find it helpful to refer to these as they prepare their analyses.

## Answers

1. Students should note that Juliet is anxious and terrified. Her doubts and fears are the normal reaction of any person (particularly a sheltered thirteen-year-old) to a horrifying situation, but her terror does not dissuade her from taking the potion. It is important that students recognize the firmness of Juliet's resolve and the power of her love—not once in this speech does she doubt that Romeo will come for her.
2. Juliet's doubts and fears begin as very concrete concerns about the effects of the potion and the Friar's loyalty. As her terror increases, her fears become more abstract—what if she awakens alone in the tomb? What if she goes mad? Finally, in an excess of hysteria, she sees and cries out to Tybalt's ghost. Students should note how Shakespeare achieved this effect through the series of questions that Juliet asks herself.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to improve their critical thinking about literature by identifying and responding objectively to diverse interpretations of literature.

## PRESENTATION

This section gives additional practice in play interpretation by inviting students to respond to others' interpretations. After reading the comments, students should write paragraphs to support or refute the writers' arguments. Stu-

dents' assertions should be supported by quotations and other evidence from the play.

Since some students may find this assignment difficult, you might select one comment as an example and discuss it before the students write about the other comments.

## RESPONDING TO AN INTERPRETATION

Students will find it helpful to read each passage carefully, looking up vocabulary words as necessary so as to understand fully what the author says.

Students should decide what the main argument of each passage is, summarize it, and respond to it after examining sufficient evidence in the play.

# PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

## Responding to an Interpretation

Read each of the following comments on *Romeo and Juliet*. Then write a paragraph or two responding to the writer's argument with quotations and evidence from the play.

[Shakespeare saw the story] as a tale of the passions of youth. His lovers are very young and innocent when love overwhelms them. So are the bored young men, loafing about town, in whom the passions of the feuding Capulets and Montagues explode so fatally. The old Capulets and Montagues, and the worried prince of Verona, feel partly responsible for the feud and try to control it. The Friar, when Romeo and Juliet confide in him, does his best to guide their love to life and safety. But the moving force which Shakespeare saw in the old story is that glamorous and dangerous passion which everyone feels in youth, and no one fully understands at any age.

Frances Fergusson  
Introduction to *Romeo and Juliet*  
Laurel Edition

In a tragedy like this, where love is the theme that is treated under its manifold aspects, the contrast of joking and laughter should not be forgotten. Through the whole piece, as in a many-voiced musical symphony, the voices of the young people at one time mingle in unison, then separate and flow onward in contrast; Benvolio the sedate, Tybalt the furious, Mercutio the witty,

Romeo the enthusiast, Paris the tender, refined youth. . . .

Johann Ludwig Tieck  
reprinted in *Romeo and Juliet*  
New Variorum Edition

The Nurse, whatever her age, is a triumphant and complete achievement. She stands foursquare, and lives and breathes in her own right from the moment she appears. You may, indeed, take any sentence the Nurse speaks throughout the play, and only she could speak it.

Harley Granville-Barker  
*Prefaces to Shakespeare*

Juliet begins as a demure girl who is prepared to listen respectfully to the advice of her mother. When she has fallen in love, she becomes suddenly a woman of great courage and resource, who will face even death and fantastic horror to regain her husband.

G. B. Harrison  
*Shakespeare: The Complete Works*

In *Romeo and Juliet* the beauty and ardor of young love are seen by Shakespeare as the irradiating glory of sunlight and starlight in a dark world. The dominating image is *light* . . . the sun, moon, stars, fire, lightning, the flash of gunpowder, and the reflected light of beauty and of love; while by contrast we have night, darkness, clouds, rain, mist, and smoke. Each of the lovers thinks of the other as light . . .

Caroline Spurgeon  
*Shakespeare's Imagery*

## For Further Reading

Barrie, Sir James Matthew, *The Admirable Crichton in English Drama in Transition 1880–1920*, edited by Henry Frank Salerno (paperback, Pegasus, 1968)

A British lord and his butler change places when their party is shipwrecked on an island.

Blinn, William, *Brian's Song* (paperback, Bantam, 1972)

Highly acclaimed as a television drama, this true story depicts the friendship of two football players, Gale Sayers and Brian Piccolo. Piccolo died of cancer in 1970.

Chekhov, Anton, *The Bear* (or *The Boor*) in *Ten Great One-Act Plays*, edited by Morris Sweetkind (paperback, Bantam, 1968)

In this play, subtitled "A Jest in One Act," a retired lieutenant of the artillery, who believes in equal rights, challenges a pretty widow to a duel.

Chute, Marchette, *Stories from Shakespeare* (paperback, New American Library, 1971)

Shakespeare's tragedies, comedies, and histories are retold simply and clearly in prose.

Gilbert, W. S., *The Pirates of Penzance in The Complete Plays of Gilbert and Sullivan* (paperback, Norton, 1976)

In this comic opera, the reader discovers an ingenious paradox: Frederick, who has been apprenticed to a band of pirates until his twenty-first birthday, discovers he was born on February 29 and is therefore only five years old.

Hansberry, Lorraine, *To Be Young, Gifted and Black*, adapted by Robert Nemiroff (paperback, New American Library, 1970)

The author of *A Raisin in the Sun* presents her autobiography in dramatic form.

Kaufman, William I., editor, *Great Television Plays*, volume I (paperback, Dell, 1969)

This collection contains six plays, including *Requiem for a Heavyweight* by Rod Serling and *Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose.

Koch, Howard, *The Invasion from Mars in The Panic Broadcast* (paperback, Avon, 1970)

The famous radio play, based on H. G. Wells's novel *The War of the Worlds*, caused a panic when it was broadcast in 1938.

Mersand, Joseph, editor, *Three Comedies of American Life* (paperback, Pocket Books, 1961)

Included are *I Remember Mama* by John van Druten, *Life with Father* by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, and *You Can't Take It with You* by Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman.

Miller, Arthur, *The Crucible* (Viking Press, 1953; paperback, many editions)

Miller based this play on the witchcraft trials in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1692.

Rose, Reginald, *The Mentor Book of Short Plays*, edited by Richard H. Goldstone and Abraham H. Lass (paperback, New American Library, 1969)

In addition to *Thunder on Sycamore Street*, this anthology includes eleven short plays written for stage, radio, and television.

Rostand, Edmund, *Cyrano de Bergerac* (many editions)

Cyrano, legendary for his wit, his swordsmanship, and his huge nose, wins the love of the beautiful Roxane.

Shakespeare, William, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (many editions)

This comedy about love and its comic confusions includes a hilarious performance of "Pyramus and Thisbe" by a troupe of amateur actors.

Sohn, David A., and Richard H. Tyre, editors, *Nine Modern Short Plays: Outstanding Works from Stage, Radio, and Television* (paperback, Bantam, 1977)

Included in this collection are works of Gore Vidal and Lucille Fletcher.

Wilder, Thornton, *Three Plays by Thornton Wilder* (Harper & Row, 1957; paperback, 1985)

The plays are *Our Town*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, and *The Matchmaker*.

### FOR FURTHER READING

Although many of these books may not be available in your school library, other works by the same authors will probably be suitable.

Shakespeare's history plays should be recommended to students who have adapted easily to Shakespeare's English. His history plays, such as *Richard III* and *Henry IV, Part I*, are action-packed and contain many humorous passages. *Henry IV, Part I*, perhaps the most famous, contains the celebrated comic figure Sir John Falstaff.

# TEACHING GUIDE

## AN EPIC POEM: THE ODYSSEY

### OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

Western civilization began in Greece nearly three thousand years ago. The literary and philosophical achievements of the Golden Age of Greece, which lasted from about 480 to 430 B.C., had a profound and lasting influence on Western culture, but it is from an earlier period, approximately 800 to 500 B.C., that the foundations of later Greek society were established. It was during this "pre-Classical" period that the two great monuments of Greek literature, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, were composed.

Sometime after the end of the Trojan War in the mid-1200s B.C., Greece fell into a Dark Age that lasted for centuries. During this Dark Age, the country was poor and sparsely populated, and there was no system of writing. Tales of an earlier, more prosperous time were told in the form of songs and poems, establishing an oral tradition.

The ancient Greeks lived in a small country with few natural resources. Most of the land was rocky and ill-suited for farming. The forests had been depleted by previous generations, and there was little wood for ships or shelter. The mountainous terrain made the construction of passable roads all but impossible; messages carried by runners were the primary means of communication. But the Greeks could always turn to the sea. No part of Greece is more than ninety miles from water, and the Greeks became the foremost seafarers of the day. They were fishermen, traders, and colonists of outlying lands.

Partly because of contact these people made with other cultures, an increasingly civilized society arose. For example, the Greeks, influenced by trade with Egypt and the East, developed intricately decorated pottery, monumental architecture, and entered an Iron Age of tool-making. Religious festivals brought together nobility, artists, and athletes and culminated in the Olympic Games. The Olympics, which were first held in 776 B.C., honored Zeus, the king of the gods. The event was so important that even wars stopped during the Olympics. Victors were crowned with laurel leaves and were glorified in poems and sculptures.

Sometime in the eighth century B.C., the Greeks borrowed aspects of an alphabet from a nearby land and adapted it to fit their own language. The earliest surviving examples of Greek writing date to 730 B.C., although it is possible that there were earlier writings that have been lost. The introduction of an alphabet allowed Homer to write down what had previously been only an oral account of perhaps the greatest event in Greek history: the Trojan War.

Little is known about the Trojan War except for what is revealed in the epics of Homer and Virgil, and even there, many details are disputed. Until well into the nineteenth century, most scholars assumed that the entire conflict was a legend with no basis in fact, but the late nineteenth-century expeditions of the German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann culminated in the discovery of ruins

that are now generally accepted as being the original site of Troy. The ruins are located in present-day Turkey and reveal that at least seven cities were built and destroyed on the same site. One of them is believed to be the Troy that Homer described. Since this discovery, the Trojan War has come to be accepted as an historical event, but the actual causes and progress of the war remain the subject of much speculation.

The earliest Greek writings continued the oral tradition of the Dark Age and consisted of oral poetry that was recorded in writing rather than a deliberate attempt to create literature. Some scholars maintain that Homer was an exceptional poet who was not literate himself but who sang or dictated his great epics to a scribe who did the actual writing. Whatever their origin, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* mark the beginnings of Western literature, and their profound influence on the Greeks and the rest of Europe remains unsurpassed.

Following Homer's time, literacy spread quickly throughout the city-states of Greece. By the fourth century B.C., the Greeks had developed nearly every important form of Western discourse, including epic poetry, history, philosophy, and drama (both tragedy and comedy).

This unit contains several selections from Homer's *Odyssey*, translated from the Greek by the poet Robert Fitzgerald. This modern, easy-to-read version of the ancient epic won Fitzgerald the 1961 Bollingen Award for the best translation of a poem into English. Of the selections appearing in *Adventures in Reading*, six concern Odysseus' adventures far from home and seven focus on the events after his return to Ithaca. The unit also contains two related poems: Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Lotus-Eaters" and Edna St. Vincent Millay's "An Ancient Gesture." A convenient list, **People and Places in the *Odyssey***, may be found at the beginning of the unit. **Developing Skills in Critical Thinking** helps students acquire higher reading and thinking skills by asking them to compare Fitzgerald's modern translation with a translation by the eighteenth-century classicist Alexander Pope. **Practice in Reading and Writing** asks students to write a short essay responding to a critical statement about character, theme, or style in the *Odyssey*.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

The aims of the unit are for the student:

- To demonstrate ability to understand and analyze significant details of plot development
- To demonstrate understanding of the climax in plot structure
- To analyze characters in the epic: their words, actions, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses
- To identify and explain foreshadowing, simile, and epithet



SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
An Epic Poem: The <i>Odyssey</i> 591	Epic 592		
Close Reading of an Epic 594			
The <i>Odyssey</i> Homer 599			
<i>Part 1 Far From Home</i> 599			
"I Am Odysseus" 599			
"The Lotus-Eaters" 601			
"The Cyclops" 602			
"The Sirens" 617			
"Scylla and Charybdis" 621			
"The Cattle of the Sun God" 624		Learning Words from the Epic 630	
<i>Part 2 Odysseus in Ithaca</i> 631			
"Father and Son" 631			
"Argos" 637			
"The Suitors" 638			
"Penelope" 641	Dramatic Irony 644		
"The Challenge" 645			
"Odysseus' Revenge" 646			
"Penelope Tests Odysseus" 651			
"Postscript" 653	Characteristics of the Epic: Homeric Simile 654 Epithet 654		Analyzing Odysseus as Epic Hero 655 Analyzing the Role of the Olympians 655
"The Lotus-Eaters" Alfred, Lord Tennyson 656			
"An Ancient Gesture" Edna St. Vincent Millay 659			
<i>Developing Skills in Critical Thinking</i> 660	Comparing Translations 660		
<i>Practice in Reading and Writing</i> 662			Responding to an Interpretation 662

- To demonstrate understanding of poems inspired by the epic **5**
- To write expository compositions about the epic and related topics **6**

## CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The following concepts and skills are treated in this unit:

### Close Reading of an Epic

Guidelines for Reading an Epic 595

### Literary Elements and Reading Skills

Epic 592

Dramatic Irony 644

Characteristics of the Epic: Homeric Simile 654

Epithet 654

### Language and Vocabulary Skills

Learning Words from the Epic 630

### Writing About Literature

Analyzing Odysseus as Epic Hero 655

Analyzing the Role of the Olympians 655

### Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Comparing Translations 660

### Practice in Reading and Writing

Responding to an Interpretation 662

## INTRODUCING THE UNIT

Students should be able to recall myths they have read in previous years. *Adventures for Readers: Book One* contains a complete unit of selections from classical mythology. Ask students what they remember about Prometheus, Persephone, Arachne, Baucis and Philemon, Phaethon, Icarus and Daedalus, Hercules, and other heroes and heroines of the classical myths. You may want to let volunteers review favorite tales for the class.

The class might be interested to learn that the Greeks believed completely in the existence of the gods we now consider mythological and honored the gods in order to win their favor. Greek religion did not have any written dogma or ordained priesthood, and knowledge about the gods was passed on in an oral tradition and through the writings of Homer and others.

Zeus was the king of all gods. He lived with his wife Hera and the rest of the gods on Mount Olympus, located in northern Greece. Since all the citizens of ancient Greece made offerings to the same gods, the only way for one city-state to gain an advantage over another was in the worship of gods uniquely associated with their own region. Each city-state, therefore, had a group of deities and legendary heroes that they relied on in times of trouble. Hero-worship was an important element of each city-state's beliefs. The hero might be the town-founder or a historical figure that played a major role in an important battle. Each household, as well, often worshipped a family hero or a minor god whom the family believed took special interest in them.

The gods of ancient Greece were human in form but were immortal and possessed superhuman powers. The gods had human failings and frequently came into conflict with one another. Anger, pride, jealousy, and other human emotions were common among gods, and their quarrels frequently influenced the course of human affairs. The gods were believed to take an interest in even the most trivial events among mankind, and most Greeks thought it was only a matter of making an offering to the right god in order to change their personal luck or fortune. The gods were often worshipped in open-air temples. The intimate relationship between gods and humans is exemplified by the fact that the gods frequently made "personal" appearances in literature and drama.

The class should be aware also that Homer's *Odyssey* was originally written in Greek. It is one of the earliest written languages and was the first written language to use letters for vowels. (Other ancient languages, including Hebrew, used marks above or next to a letter to indicate the presence of a vowel.) By the time of the Golden Age, Greece had become such a prosperous trading country that Greek was the primary trading language in the Mediterranean and remained so for centuries. In the first century A.D., Greek was so widely understood that the authors of the New Testament wrote in that language in order to reach the widest possible audience. During the Roman Empire, Greek was the language of diplomacy and was spoken by most educated Romans.

Greek was originally written right to left. By Homer's time, the standard was to write one line left to right and then the next line right to left. The writers of Greece's Golden Age settled on writing only from left to right, and this system was adopted by writers of Latin and ultimately English.

Modern Greek is spoken today by the ten million citizens of Greece. The language has changed little during three thousand years, and Greeks today can read the writings of Homer with approximately the same fluency that modern English speakers can read Chaucer.

You may want to refer to another selection in *Adventures in Reading* at this point. Ask students what Harry Mark Petrakis learned from the Greek grocer Barba Nikos in "A Whole Nation and a People." Students might look at the selection to note again the references to Greek heroes and gods. You may comment on the abundance of classical allusions in the literature of the Western world. See *Bulfinch's Mythology*, for example, which quotes many allusions to Greek and Roman mythologies. Mention the possibility that characters and events in the *Odyssey* will inspire students in their own writing of essays, stories, poems, and plays.

The introductory material on pages 592–598 is worth thorough study and discussion. Use the **Guidelines for Reading an Epic** to introduce major characters, themes, and stylistic characteristics of the epic. Help students with the pronunciation of names, referring as necessary to **People and Places in the *Odyssey*** (pages 597–598). As you read aloud and discuss the introductory essay, you may wish to bring in additional information about epics, Greek history, Olympian gods and goddesses, and Mediterranean geography. You may want to assign special reports for later presentation.

The different interpretations of the *Odyssey*, given on page 593, are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Students might enjoy the epic as an adventure story, appreciate it as a forerunner of the

novel, and finally see it as representative of the journey of every human being.

## FOR REINFORCEMENT / EVALUATION

The **Closure** feature in this unit provides suggestions for reinforcing and concluding classroom instruction. In addition to the **Reading Check** feature in the textbook, a *Study Guide* worksheet and a test for each selection or group of selections in the unit are available in the *Teacher's Literature Companion*.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING SCHEDULE

The following schedule may be adapted to fit individual needs:

Introduction and **Close Reading**: one or two days

"I Am Odysseus," "The Lotus-Eaters," and "The Cyclops": two days

"The Sirens," "Scylla and Charybdis," and "The Cattle of the Sun God": one or two days

"Father and Son": one day

"Argos," "The Suitors," and "Penelope": one or two days  
"The Challenge," "Odysseus' Revenge," "Penelope Tests Odysseus," and "Postscript": two days

"The Lotus-Eaters" and "An Ancient Gesture": one day

In addition, you may want to use one day between Parts I and II for review, writing activities, and projects. At the end of the unit, you may want to schedule two days for review and testing and one or two days for writing activities and presentation of projects. The unit should therefore be allotted approximately three weeks.

## USING THE FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS

This unit contains all Pupil's Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. The top margins contain teaching strategies to be used for in-class reference and for planning lessons. The side margins offer information related directly to the text that appears on the reduced pages. These side-margin annotations are designed primarily to be used after students have read the selections and can therefore serve as in-class lecture notes.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

A Dutch-born painter who became a naturalized British citizen, Alma-Tadema was famous for historical paintings of ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman life. His extravagant but accurate portrayals of costumes and settings, which convey textures of silk, bronze, and marble, appealed to his Victorian audience. In setting and scope, his dramatic portrayal anticipates the spectacular film style of the early twentieth century.

### Ideas for Writing

The details in Alma-Tadema's painting suggest the almost hypnotic power of the bard on his audience. Close observation of the attitudes, dress, architecture, furniture, and articles such as the lyre are excellent subjects for class discussion or writing.



## AN EPIC POEM: THE ODYSSEY



*A Reading from Homer* by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836–1912). Oil on canvas.

Philadelphia Museum of Art, George B. Elkins Collection

### THE ODYSSEY

According to tradition, Homer was a blind bard from the island of Chios. His two epics, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, have come down through the ages as superior examples of oral storytelling. Storytelling was a popular art form in ancient Greece, and the bard, or *rhapsode*, held a place of honor in society. Often a bard became a member of a particular *oikos*, or household, which was the basic social unit and included a king or nobleman, his family, his slaves, and artisans. In the court of King Alcinous of Phaeacia, Demodocus brings tears to Odysseus' eyes when he sings of the deeds at Troy, and Odysseus himself takes the role of a bard when he relates his adventures to the waiting court.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Encourage students to think about their lives as odysseys or journeys. Point out that although epic poems include myth, legend, and history, they are basically stories of personal lives and values.

## UNIT INTRODUCTION

1

Tradition places Homer's birth on Chios, an island on the coast of Asia Minor, south of Troy.

2

Some critics believe two different poets composed the epics; others believe *Iliad* was composed in Homer's youth, *Odyssey* in his maturity.

3

Archaeological discoveries of the last century set approximate date of Trojan War as 1250 B.C.

4

Paris had given an apple "for the fairest" to Aphrodite, who offered him the love of the beautiful Helen.

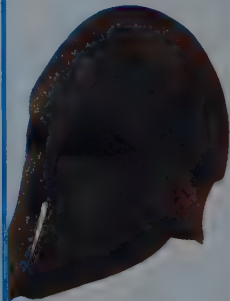
5

Odysseus pretended madness to escape the war but was discovered when he swerved his plow to avoid hitting Telemachus, his baby son.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Greek soldier's gear included a bronze helmet usually adorned with a crest of horsehair. The helmet restricted hearing and side vision but protected the head in hand-to-hand combat.



Corinthian bronze helmet, early fifth century B.C.

## PRESENTATION

After you have reminded students that Greek myths they have read are important background information for Homer's *Odyssey*, discuss briefly the major events of the Trojan War as narrated in the *Iliad* and summarized in the unit introduc-

tion. Then use the invocation presented in **Close Reading of an Epic** as well as **Guidelines for Reading an Epic** to introduce **characters, themes, setting, and style** in the epic.

You may occasionally need to remind students that Homer was as far removed from the Trojan

An *epic* is a long narrative poem about a national or legendary hero. Ancient Greece produced two epics—the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—which are considered the first great works of Western literature. The *Odyssey* is named for its hero, Odysseus, who is also known as Ulysses. The *Iliad* is not named for its hero, Achilles, but for Ilium, or Troy, the setting of the action.

Since classical times, both epics have been attributed to a poet named Homer. We know almost nothing about him. Seven different cities claimed to be his birthplace, but none could prove the claim. There is a tradition that Homer was blind, and an ancient bust shows him to be so. If he was blind, he must have had his sight at one time, for the poems are so rich in visual imagery that they are clearly the creation of someone who had observed the world carefully.

Scholars have established that the *Iliad* was composed sometime between 900 and 700 B.C. and that it preceded the *Odyssey* by some years. The raw material of both epics was a well-known body of legend about the most famous event in Greek history, the Trojan War, which had occurred several centuries earlier, about 1200 B.C. The probable cause of the Trojan War was economic. Troy's location enabled it to control all trade and shipping through the Dardanelles: once Troy was destroyed, the Greeks could expand their trade routes as much as they pleased. According to legend, however, the war began when Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world and wife of King Menelaus of Sparta, was kidnapped by Paris, a young Trojan prince. It took several years for the outraged Menelaus to assemble an army, for Greece was not a unified nation at that time. Kings and soldiers from all over Greece—Achilles and Odysseus among them—sailed to Troy to bring back Helen. The war went on for ten years, and finally the Trojans were defeated.

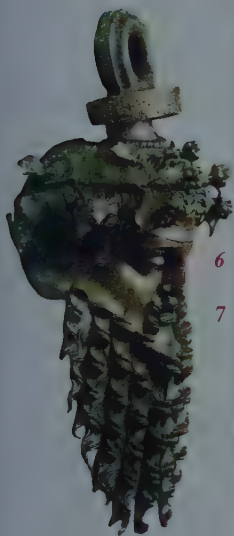
Homer used this legendary material as the basis for his poems. He added an original plot structure, realistic characters, dialogue and detail, and tales of fabulous monsters. Against the drama on earth he set the drama of the Olympian gods and goddesses, who were interested in human affairs and who often intervened to protect or punish mortals. Homer's portrayal of the gods made them seem human. They quarreled and loved and were jealous of each other. Although Homer occasionally treats the gods lightly, he is always respectful. A pervasive theme throughout these epics is that respect for the gods is essential to survival.

When the poems were first composed, they were not written down. They were passed orally from one generation to the next. They were memorized by traveling poets called *rhapsodes* (răp'sōdz'), who recited the epics in the banquet halls of kings and nobles. Both poems were re-



War and its aftermath as we are from Columbus and the exploration of the New World. Point out that although the Golden Age of Greece occurred many centuries after Homer, its torch was first lighted by the heroes and poets of the old epics. You may wish to quote Edith Hamilton's

statement that the ancient Greek poems show "the fire of life burning high," and encourage students to see this fire in Odysseus.



Dionysiac mask. Bronze with traces of silver and copper, first century A.D. In Greek mythology, Dionysos was the god of revelry.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Mrs. Gerald van der Kemp

cited in public every four years in Athens at the festival of Athena, goddess of wisdom and patron of the city. In time, the study of Homer's epics became the basis of Greek education. From Homer, Greek youths learned how to tell a story, to portray character, to give a speech, and to express the Greek ideals of thought and action. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* became models for later writers, notably the Roman poet Virgil, author of the *Aeneid* (ī-nē'īd).

The *Iliad* opens in the tenth—and last—year of the Trojan War. The war is at a stalemate, and in the Greek camp there is much dissension. Achilles, the greatest warrior among the Greeks, and Agamemnon, the leader of the Greeks, have had a bitter quarrel over a captive slave girl. Achilles has withdrawn from the war and is sulking in his tent. His absence from the field gives the Trojans an advantage in the war. Only after Hector, the great Trojan hero, kills Achilles' friend Patroclus (pə-trō'kləs) does Achilles return to combat. He kills Hector, and his victory demoralizes the Trojans. The *Iliad* ends with a twelve-day truce in which both sides bury and mourn their dead.

Homer tells about the last days of the Trojan War in his second epic. The man responsible for the fall of Troy is Odysseus, the shrewdest of the Greeks. He conceives a plan to leave a huge wooden horse filled with Greek warriors outside the gates of Troy. Believing that the Greek ships have sailed for home and that this wooden horse is an offering to the gods, the Trojans bring the horse within their gates. When the Trojans are off guard, the Greeks slip out of the horse and open the city gates to their own army.

Because Odysseus is instrumental in the destruction of Troy, he angers the gods who are sympathetic to Troy. They vow that he will have a long and difficult journey home. This homeward journey—which takes ten years—is the subject of the *Odyssey*.

The *Odyssey* is a very long poem—11,300 lines divided into twenty-four books. The poem has three major plot strands. First, there is the story of what happens in Ithaca to Odysseus' wife and son as they await his return. The second story is the tale of Odysseus' wanderings during the ten years following the Trojan War. These two strands come together when Odysseus returns to Ithaca and joins forces with his son, Telemachus, to destroy their enemies.

People have interpreted the *Odyssey* in many different ways. Some read it simply as an exciting adventure story. In this sense, with its emphasis on character and plot, it has been rightly called a forerunner of the novel. Others interpret the *Odyssey* as the story of every human being, who must overcome temptations and obstacles in the journey through life and in the effort to find a place of peace and joy.

You will be reading some of the best-known excerpts from the

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Greek drama emerged from religious festivals dedicated to Dionysos. Actors wore large masks so that audiences in large amphitheaters could recognize the characters and emotions portrayed on the distant stage.

6 Achilles is invulnerable except for one heel by which mother Thetis held him when she dipped him in the River Styx.

7 Agamemnon had to release his captive, Chryseis, to rid Greeks of plague and demanded Achilles' captive, Briseis, as replacement.

8 Gods sympathetic to Troy were Artemis, Apollo, Ares, Aphrodite. Odysseus' theft of Palladium, Troy's statue of Athena, temporarily alienated his patron, Athena.

9 Siege of Troy and Odysseus' return each took ten years.

10 First plot is often called "The Telemachy" because it tells story of Telemachus' growing up.

11 Emphasizes folk-tale motif of "the wanderer."

## CLOSE READING OF AN EPIC

1

*Illiad* and *Odyssey* are primary epics, drawn from oral tradition. Poet calls on one of nine muses (daughters of Zeus) and Mnemosyne (goddess of memory); suggests importance of memory to oral epic.

2

Calliope—muse of epic poetry. By asking muse to “Sing in me,” Homer credits her for epic.

3

**Characterization.** Odysseus known for “contending” (striving) in combat or struggle.

4

Greeks looted Troy, killed males, enslaved women.

5

Suggests responsibility for one’s actions; Odysseus’ men cause their own fate.

6

*Helios*: god of the sun.

7

Muse renews epic, or song, each time it is told.

8

Nestor returned soon without incident; Agamemnon returned safely but was murdered by his wife and her lover; Menelaus returned safely after eight years.

poem. In Part 1 of the unit, you will read about the adventures of Odysseus and his crew as they attempt to return to Ithaca. In Part 2, you will read how Odysseus takes his place as rightful king of Ithaca. The text is a translation from the Greek by the American poet Robert Fitzgerald.

## CLOSE READING OF AN EPIC

### Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

1

lofty tone and dignified style of the epic are evident in its opening lines:

2

3

4

Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story  
of that man skilled in all ways of contending,  
the wanderer, harried for years on end,  
after he plundered the stronghold  
on the proud height of Troy.

5

6

He saw the townlands  
and learned the minds of many distant men,  
and weathered many bitter nights and days  
in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only  
to save his life, to bring his shipmates home.  
But not by will nor valor could he save them,  
for their own recklessness destroyed them all—  
children and fools, they killed and feasted on  
the cattle of Lord Helios, the Sun,  
and he who moves all day through heaven  
took from their eyes the dawn of their return.

7

8

Of these adventures, Muse, daughter of Zeus,  
tell us in our time, lift the great song again.  
Begin when all the rest who left behind them

- 9 headlong death in battle or at sea  
 10 had long ago returned, while he alone still hungered  
 11 for home and wife. Her ladyship Calypso  
 12 clung to him in her sea-hollowed caves—  
 a nymph, immortal and most beautiful,  
 who craved him for her own.
- And when long years and seasons  
 wheeling brought around that point of time  
 ordained for him to make his passage homeward,  
 trials and dangers, even so, attended him  
 even in Ithaca, near those he loved.

Note that these lines also give a brief summation of the hero's adventures. After the Trojan War Odysseus becomes a "wanderer." He attempts to bring his shipmates home but fails. His men are all destroyed by "their own recklessness" in killing the cattle of Helios, the god of the sun. Odysseus is left to wander alone. For a time he is held captive by a beautiful goddess, Calypso. Finally he is allowed to return home to his family in Ithaca, where he faces many other dangers.

Here are some guidelines to help you in your reading.

## Guidelines for Reading an Epic

1. *Become familiar with the names of characters and places.* There are many characters, often referred to by different descriptive phrases. Refer to the list provided on pages 597–598 as often as necessary. The individual entries identify the people and places mentioned in the *Odyssey* and will give you assistance in pronouncing each name.
2. *Take note of the heroic characteristics of the central figure or figures.* Expect that the hero will be extraordinary and that his adventures will be on a grand scale.
3. *Determine the role played by gods, goddesses, and other supernatural agents. Consider their responsibility for the destiny of human beings.* Odysseus has friends and enemies among the gods and goddesses of Olympus. Note how they intervene to help or to hinder him.
4. *Note the conventional elements of the epic.* You have already seen one convention of the Homeric epic—the invocation to the Muse. Other conventions are lengthy speeches, repetitions of passages, and digressions. Two conventions deserve special attention: the *epithet* and the *epic simile*. An *epithet* is a word or phrase used to characterize a person or thing. Homer uses many epithets for the gods and goddesses as

9 **Theme.** Appreciation for and love of home emphasized.

10 Odysseus spent seven years on Calypso's island.

11 Suggests role of fate in determining Odysseus' life.

12 Places mentioned in invocation have symbolic importance: just as Odysseus' wanderings take him from Troy home to Ithaca, invocation begins with Troy and ends with Ithaca.

## READING AN EPIC

1. Central characters are Odysseus, his wife Penelope, his son Telemachus. Other important characters mentioned in invocation are Zeus, Helios, and Calypso.
2. Odysseus exhibits strength, courage, intelligence; in quest, he is separated from home and tested and returns with new knowledge.
3. Athena aids Odysseus; Poseidon hinders him.
4. Digressions usually develop **theme** or **character**, as in contrast between Clytemnestra's betrayal and Penelope's loyalty; **repetition** and **epithets** emphasize oral quality of epic; **epic similes** develop **theme** and **character**.



5. Odysseus embodies Greek values of honor (*aidos*), bravery, hospitality, intelligence, respect for the gods, and loyalty to home and family.

well as for the human characters in his poem. Some of the epithets for Zeus are “the father of gods and men,” “the master of heaven and high thunder,” “Hera’s consort,” “the lord of cloud,” and “the son of Cronus.” An *epic simile* is an extended comparison, often running several lines. Here is an epic simile from the *Odyssey*:

Just as a farmer’s hunger grows, behind  
the bolted plow and share, all day afield,  
drawn by his team of winedark oxen; sundown  
is benison for him, sending him homeward  
stiff in the knees from weariness, to dine;  
just so, the light on the sea rim gladdened Odysseus . . .

5. Look for the underlying beliefs and values of the culture that produced the *epic*. The qualities attributed to the heroic figures of the epic generally reflect the ideals of its society.

## PRESENTATION

This section will help students with pronunciation of names of people and places in the epic. Encourage students to refer to this section in discussing and writing about the *Odyssey*. You may also want to introduce students to the Greek

alphabet and have them copy a few words from a Greek edition of the *Odyssey*. This activity will give them a better appreciation of Homer's language and of the art of translation.

## People and Places in The Odyssey

**Achaean** (ə-kē'ənz): Greeks; specifically, the people of Achaea in northeastern Greece.

**Aeaea** (ē-ē'ə): island home of Circe, the enchantress.

**1 Agamemnon** (äg'ə-mēm'nōn'): commander of the Greeks during the Trojan War.

**Alcinous** (äl-sīn'ō-əs): King of Phaeacia.

**Antinous** (än-tīn'ō-əs): an Ithacan noble, most arrogant of the suitors.

**Apollo** (ə-pōl'ō): in Greek mythology, god of poetry, music, and prophecy.

**Argo** (är'gō): the ship manned by Jason and his crew of Greek heroes on their quest for the Golden Fleece.

**Athena** (ə-thē'nə): Greek goddess of wisdom, crafts, and war; also called Pallas (pāl'əs) Athena.

**3 Calypso** (kə-līp'sō): beautiful sea nymph, who kept Odysseus on her island for seven years.

**Charybdis** (kə-rīb'dīs): a whirlpool in the Straits of Messina, personified as a female monster.

**Cicones** (sī-kō'nēz): a people living on the southwestern coast of Thrace, who were attacked by Odysseus' men on their way home from Troy.

**Circe** (sūr'sē): beautiful witch-goddess who transformed Odysseus' men into beasts.

**Cronus** (krō'nəs): in Greek mythology, a Titan and ruler of the universe until he was overthrown by his son, Zeus.

**Cyclops** (sī'klōps): member of a race of one-eyed giants. The Cyclopes (sī-klō'pēz) were said to have lived as shepherds on the island of Sicily.

**Eumaeus** (yōō-mē'əs): a swineherd, an old and loyal servant to Odysseus.

**Eurycleia** (yōō-rī-klē'yə): Penelope's servant and Odysseus' old nurse.

**Eurylochus** (yōō-rīl'ə-kəs): one of Odysseus' crew.

**Eurymachus** (yōō-rīm'ə-kəs): one of Penelope's suitors, an Ithacan noble.

**Eurynome** (yōō-rīn'ə-mē): Penelope's housekeeper.

**4 Helios** (hē'lē-ōs'): in early Greek mythology, the sun god.

**Ithaca** (īth'ə-kə): Odysseus' home, an island off the western coast of Greece.

**Laertes** (lā-ūr'tēz): Odysseus' father.

**Laestrygonians** (lē's-trī-gō'nē-ənz): race of man-eating giants.

**5 Odysseus** (ō-dīs'yōōs', ō-dīs'ē-əs): king of Ithaca and hero of the *Odyssey*.

**Penelope** (pə-nēl'ə-pē): Odysseus' wife.

## PEOPLE AND PLACES IN THE ODYSSEY

**1**

Agamemnon's return to betrayal and death contrasts with Odysseus' victorious return to a faithful wife.

**2**

As goddess of war and wisdom, Athena is attracted to the brave and intelligent Odysseus and aids his return.

**3**

She and Odysseus were parents of Telegonus; one legend says that years after events of the *Odyssey*, Telegonus searched for his father Odysseus and unknowingly killed him in Ithaca.

**4**

Plants that turn toward the sun are called heliotropes.

**5**

Name *Odysseus* means "to cause pain."

**6**  
Represents ideal civilization; contrasts with barbarism of Cyclopes' island.

**7**  
Supported Greeks against Trojans, who had cheated him out of pay for building city walls; turned on Greeks when they defiled Athena's temple and on Odysseus after Cyclops Polyphemus' curse.

**8**  
One myth says that because Poseidon loved the maiden Scylla, his wife Amphitrite threw magic herbs into Scylla's bath and turned her into monster with six heads—perhaps dogs' heads.

**9**  
According to some critics, the Sirens represent knowledge.

#### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

##### About the Artwork

The art of vase painting flourished in Attica, the region around Athens, between the eighth and fourth centuries B.C. Attic pottery was made of tough clay that was pink because of a high percentage of iron. Application of a wash before decorating, the firing procedure, and a final application of red ochre intensified the reddish color.

**6 Phaeacia** (fē-ā'shə): an island kingdom inhabited by seafarers and traders.

**Polyphemus** (pōl'ə-fē'məs): a Cyclops, son of Poseidon.

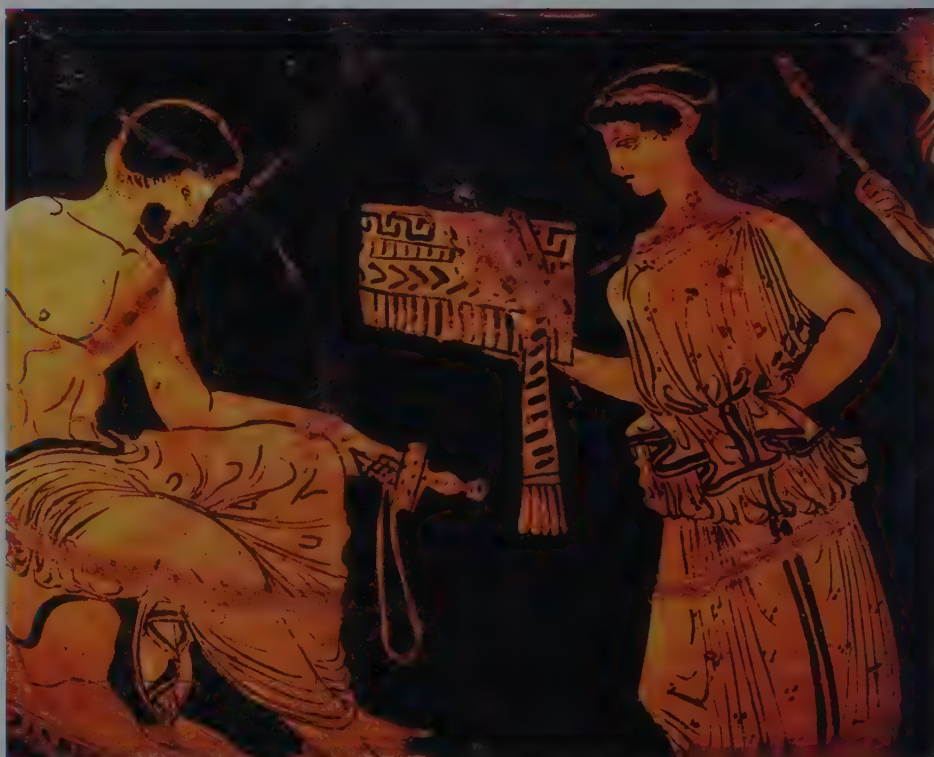
**7 Poseidon** (pō-sī'dən): Greek god of the sea; identified with the Roman god Neptune.

**8 Scylla** (sīl'ə): a dangerous rock in the Straits of Messina, personified as a female monster with six heads who devoured passing sailors.

**9 Sirens** (sī'rənz): sea nymphs who lured sailors to destruction with their songs.

**Telemachus** (tə-lēm'ə-kəs): son of Odysseus and Penelope.

**Zeus** (zōōs): ruler of the gods and goddesses on Mount Olympus. He is sometimes called Zeus Cronion, meaning the "son of Cronus" (see page 597).



*Ulysses and Calypso*. Detail from Attic red-figured vase, fifth century B.C. Ulysses is the Roman name for Odysseus. In the *Odyssey*, he spends seven years on the island of Calypso, a sea nymph.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to identify specific traits of Odysseus' character as revealed in episodes of the Cicones, the Lotus-Eaters, and the Cyclops. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 630 asks students to determine the current usage of *odyssey* and *cyclopean*.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students if they have ever been in a difficult situation that required them to keep steady nerves and use their wits. Encourage them to examine how Odysseus uses nerve and wit to escape from the Lotus-Eaters and Cyclopes.

# The Odyssey

HOMER

Translated by  
Robert Fitzgerald

## PART 1 FAR FROM HOME

### "I Am Odysseus"

*Odysseus is in the banquet hall of Alcinous (āl-sīn'ō-əs), King of Phaeacia (fē-ā'shə), who helps him on his way after all his comrades have been killed and his last vessel destroyed. Odysseus tells the story of his adventures thus far.*

1 "I am Laertes" son, Odysseus.

Men hold me

2 formidable for guile in peace and war:

this fame has gone abroad to the sky's rim.

My home is on the peaked sea-mark of Ithaca°

under Mount Neion's° wind-blown robe of leaves,

in sight of other islands—Dulichium,°

Same, wooded Zacynthus°—Ithaca

being most lofty in that coastal sea,

and northwest, while the rest lie east and south.

3 A rocky isle, but good for a boy's training;

4 I shall not see on earth a place more dear,

5 though I have been detained long by Calypso,°

loveliest among goddesses, who held me

in her smooth caves, to be her heart's delight,

6 as Circe of Aeaea,° the enchantress,

desired me, and detained me in her hall.

But in my heart I never gave consent.

Where shall a man find sweetness to surpass

his own home and his parents? In far lands

he shall not, though he find a house of gold.

1. **Laertes** (lā-ūr'tēz).

4. **Ithaca** (īth'ə-kə): an island  
off the west coast of Greece.

5. **Neion** (nē-i'ən).

6. **Dulichium** (dōō-līk'e-əm).

7. **Zacynthus** (zə-sin'thəs).

10

12. **Calypso** (kə-līp'sō).

15

15. **Circe** (sūr'sē) of Aeaea  
(ē-ē'ə).

20

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote prepares the reader for Odysseus' account of his tragic adventures. Students might be asked to think about the following questions as they read: How were all of his comrades killed? How were his ships destroyed? How was he able to survive?

## The Odyssey

After students have read the first three sections of the narrative, the margin annotations will assist you in introducing the characteristics of an epic hero.

## I Am Odysseus

1

**Point of view.** Odysseus' story is told from first-person point of view.

2

**Characterization.** "Guile" suggests Odysseus' cunning, shrewdness.

3

**How could the "rocky isle" have been "good for a boy's training"?** Rocky soil that made farming difficult encouraged hard work, strength, and determination.

4

**Theme.** Emphasizes theme of love for home.

5

Odysseus had spent seven years on island of Ogygia with Calypso, who offered him immortality if he would stay with her, but he chose wife, home, and mortality.

6

The sorceress Circe, on whose island Odysseus spent one year, instructed him in surviving terrors of underworld and sea.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guides 78, 79, and 80 / Selection Test 45 / Reading Check 43 / Vocabulary Tests 27 and 28 /

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

In the banquet hall of King Alcinous, Odysseus proudly identifies himself and begins to recount his tragic adventures. He has been kept far from home for many years by such formidable adversaries as the Cicones, the Lotus-Eaters, and the

Cyclops Polyphemus. How was he able to defeat them? What did his victories cost him?

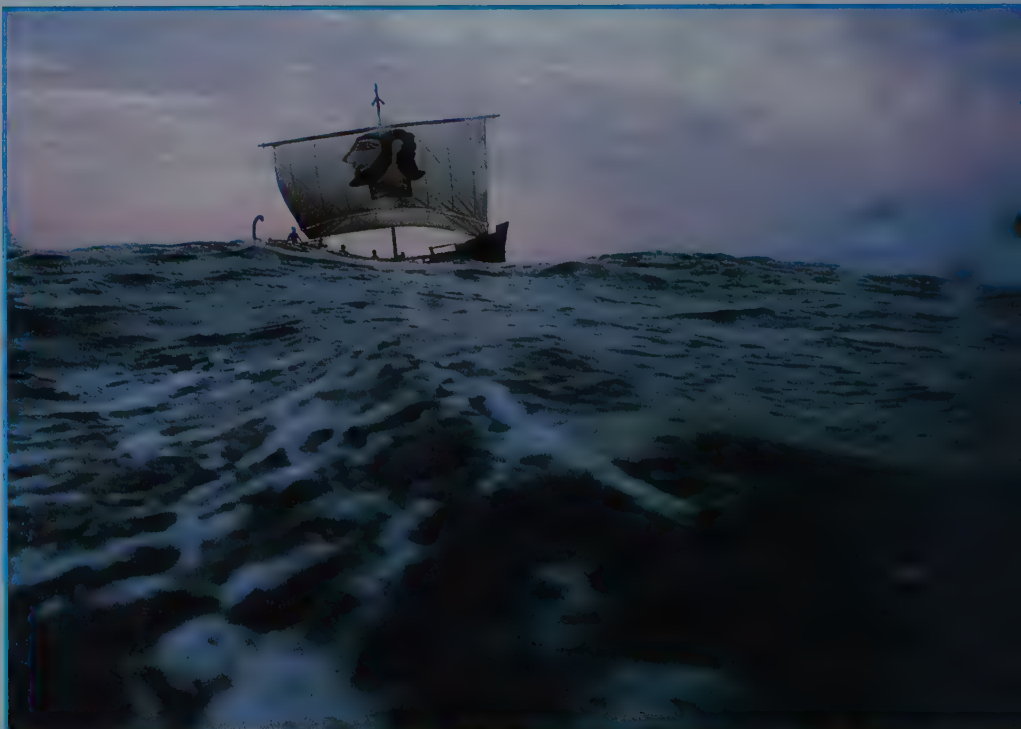
## PRESENTATION

As he relates the story of his wanderings, Odysseus takes on the role of a poet or bard. Emphasize that his experiences have “tested” him, helping him to grow in character and to understand himself—to discover his own iden-

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Severin, who has also traced the mythical voyages of Sinbad and Jason, took an international crew with him on his voyage aboard a replica of a late Bronze Age galley like one Odysseus might have used. Bearing in mind Odysseus’ caution as well as his craftiness, Severin believes that the geography of the *Odyssey* was on a small scale and centered around mainland Greece. Additional details of Severin’s voyage may be found in the August 1986 issue of *National Geographic*.



A re-creation of Odysseus’ ship. The voyage of Odysseus from the site of Troy (in present-day Turkey) to Ithaca was re-created in 1985 in a trip led by British navigator Tim Severin.

**7** *Weathered* effectively suggests connection between weather and Zeus, god of sky.

**8** *Symbol.* Odysseus’ literal journey west to Ithaca parallels his journey through life.

**9** War customs in Greece were barbaric; however, Odysseus treats his men fairly.

**10** Their own rebellious actions and greed destroy Odysseus’ men.

**11** Greeks fought on foot and were unprepared for men on horses.

What of my sailing, then, from Troy?

What of those years

**7** of rough adventure, weathered under Zeus?<sup>22</sup>

**8** The wind that carried west from Ilion<sup>23</sup> brought me to Ismarus, on the far shore, a strongpoint on the coast of the Cicones.<sup>25</sup>

I stormed that place and killed the men who fought.

**9** Plunder we took, and we enslaved the women, to make division, equal shares to all—but on the spot I told them: ‘Back, and quickly!

**10** Out to sea again!’ My men were mutinous, fools, on stores of wine. Sheep after sheep they butchered by the surf, and shambling cattle, feasting—while fugitives went inland, running to call to arms the main force of Cicones.

**11** This was an army, trained to fight on horseback or, where the ground required, on foot. They came

**22.** Zeus (zōōs): king of the gods.

**23.** Ilion (il’ē-ōn): Troy.

**25.** Cicones (sī-kō’nēz).

30

35

tity. Contrast the clear statement of identity—personal, familial, and geographical—as he begins to tell his tale (ll. 1–9) with the lack of identity suggested by the name *Nohbdy* in the episode of the Cyclops.

Also contrast Odysseus to the other charac-

ters—the thoughtless crew, the irresponsible Lotus-Eaters, and the barbaric Cyclops.

Discuss briefly the customs and values of the day as represented in the hero Odysseus. Explain that ancient Greeks considered disrespect for the gods, lack of hospitality, and *hubris* (excessive

pride) to be major faults. Help students to see that Odysseus does display *hubris* but that he also exhibits the positive traits of intelligence and courage.

- 12 with dawn over that terrain like the leaves  
and blades of spring. So doom appeared to us,  
dark word of Zeus for us, our evil days.  
My men stood up and made a fight of it—  
backed on the ships, with lances kept in play,  
from bright morning through the blaze of noon  
holding our beach, although so far outnumbered;  
13 but when the sun passed toward unyoking time,  
then the Achaeans,<sup>o</sup> one by one, gave way.  
14 Six benches were left empty in every ship  
that evening when we pulled away from death.  
15 And this new grief we bore with us to sea:  
our precious lives we had, but not our friends.  
No ship made sail next day until some shipmate  
had raised a cry, three times, for each poor ghost  
unfleshed by the Cicones on that field.

40

45 45. **Achaeans**(ə-kē'ənz):Greeks  
(Odysseus' men).

50

## The Lotus-Eaters

- 1 Now Zeus the lord of cloud roused in the north  
2 a storm against the ships, and driving veils  
of squall moved down like night on land and sea.  
The bows went plunging at the gust; sails  
3 cracked and lashed out strips in the big wind.  
4 We saw death in that fury, dropped the yards,  
unshipped the oars, and pulled for the nearest lee:<sup>o</sup>  
Then two long days and nights we lay offshore  
worn out and sick at heart, tasting our grief,  
until a third Dawn came with ringlets shining.  
Then we put up our masts, hauled sail, and rested,  
letting the steersmen and the breeze take over.

55

60 59. **lee**: place sheltered from  
the wind.

I might have made it safely home, that time,  
but as I came round Malea the current  
took me out to sea, and from the north  
a fresh gale drove me on, past Cythera.  
Nine days I drifted on the teeming sea  
before dangerous high winds. Upon the tenth  
we came to the coastline of the Lotus-Eaters,  
who live upon that flower. We landed there  
to take on water. All ships' companies  
mustered alongside for the midday meal.

65

66. **Malea** (mə'le-ə).

68. **Cythera** (sī-thīr'ə).

70

- 12 **Simile.** Emphasizes that Cicones  
are numerous, cover the terrain.

- 13 "Unyoking time" is day's end,  
when the oxen are unyoked; sug-  
gests agricultural society on Ith-  
aca.

- 14 Some Greek ships carried as  
many as 170 rowers.

- 15 First of Odysseus' men to be lost  
on homeward voyage; Odysseus'  
reaction here is calmer than later  
reactions to loss.

## The Lotus-Eaters

- 1 **What epithet describes Zeus?**  
"The lord of cloud."

- 2 **Figurative language.** "Veils" is  
used metaphorically to describe  
how squalls (storms) cover land.  
**Simile** ("like night") emphasizes  
darkness that storms bring.

- 3 **Imagery.** Sound imagery of  
"cracked" and "lashed" suggests  
fury of storm.

- 4 **Yards** are long, tapering poles  
slung at right angles to a mast to  
support and spread a square  
sail.



**5** What characteristics does Odysseus show in sending only three men to investigate the unknown island? Caution, leadership, and intelligence.

**6** Eating lotus was believed to induce forgetfulness and laziness.

**7** Land of Lotus-Eaters has been identified as North African coast or, as Severin believes, western coast of Crete; the Lotus flowers have been identified as lotus plants or dates.

**8** **Characterization.** Illustrates Odysseus' leadership and intelligence.

**9** Emphasizes theme of longing for home.

## The Cyclops

**1** Severin identifies Crete as home of the Cyclopes, relating that local folklore tells of *triamates*—giant one-eyed ogres feared by mountain shepherds.

**2** Use to answer study question 4, p. 616.

**3** On Crete, Severin found many wild goats with muscular bodies and huge curling horns like those described in the *Odyssey*.

**5** Then I sent out two picked men and a runner to learn what race of men that land sustained. 75

**6** They fell in, soon enough, with Lotus-Eaters, who showed no will to do us harm, only  
**7** offering the sweet Lotus to our friends— but those who ate this honeyed plant, the Lotus, never cared to report, nor to return: they longed to stay forever, browsing on that native bloom, forgetful of their homeland. 80

**8** I drove them, all three wailing, to the ships, tied them down under their rowing benches, and called the rest: 'All hands aboard; come, clear the beach and no one taste 85

**9** the Lotus, or you lose your hope of home.' Filing in to their places by the rowlocks my oarsmen dipped their long oars in the surf, and we moved out again on our seafaring. 90

## The Cyclops

**1** In the next land we found were Cyclopes,<sup>o</sup>  
**2** giants, louts, without a law to bless them.

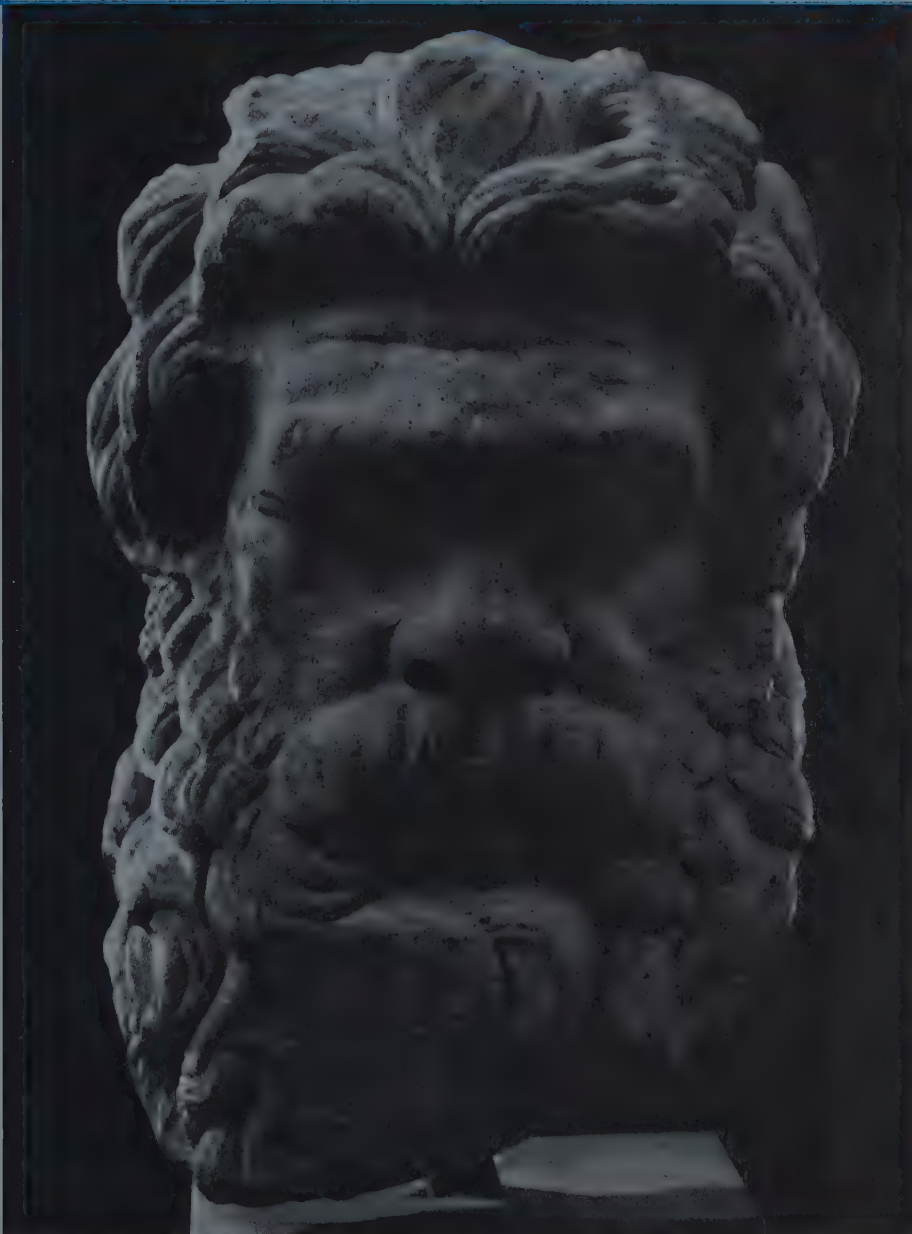
In ignorance leaving the fruitage of the earth in mystery to the immortal gods, they neither plow nor sow by hand, nor till the ground, though grain— wild wheat and barley—grows untended, and wine grapes, in clusters, ripen in heaven's rain. Cyclopes have no muster and no meeting, no consultation or old tribal ways, but each one dwells in his own mountain cave dealing out justice to wife and child, indifferent to what the others do. . . . 95

As we rowed on, and nearer to the mainland, at one end of the bay, we saw a cavern yawning above the water, screened with laurel, and many rams and goats about the place inside a sheepfold—made from slabs of stone earthfast between tall trunks of pine and rugged towering oak trees. 100

A prodigious<sup>o</sup> man slept in this cave alone, and took his flocks 110

**92. Cyclopes** (sī-klō'pēz), plural form of Cyclops (sī-klōps); a race of one-eyed giants.

**110. prodigious** (prō-dij'əs): gigantic.



*Head of the Cyclops (Polyphemus).* Hellenistic sculpture in the tradition of Pergamon. Stone, c. 150 B.C.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

#### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

##### **Exploring the Subject**

A major center of Hellenistic sculpture was Pergamum, a city in northwestern Asia Minor. The Pergamum style, which is also seen in *Dying Gaul* and *Nike of Samothrace*, was more active, dramatic, and emotional than the earlier classical style.

##### **Ideas for Writing**

Homer's *Odyssey* vividly describes the Cyclops as having unique physical characteristics. Additionally, the Cyclops' actions indirectly distinguish his personality. Have students write a character portrait of the Cyclops with supporting details from Homer's narrative. As an alternate assignment, some students might want to create a visual portrait of the Cyclops as he is described in the *Odyssey*.

4 **Simile.** Comparison of Cyclops to "a shaggy mountain reared in solitude" suggests his size and foreshadows his lack of hospitality.

5 Maron and Odysseus had a "guest-friendship," an ancient Greek custom in which a traveler was provided lodging and valuable "guest gifts," which he was expected to return in kind.

6 **What does offering Odysseus the wines indicate about Maron?** He takes pride in offering his "best."

7 In ancient times, fermented wine, which was much safer to drink than unpurified water, was consumed by all.

8 **Characterization.** Cyclops' "fat sheep," sagging racks, and crowded pens show his wealth and emphasize his greed and lack of hospitality.

9 First of two times that Odysseus ignores his men's good advice.

to graze afield—remote from all companions, knowing none but savage ways, a brute so huge, he seemed no man at all of those

4 who eat good wheaten bread; but he seemed rather a shaggy mountain reared in solitude.

We beached there, and I told the crew to stand by and keep watch over the ship; as for myself I took my twelve best fighters and went ahead. I had a goatskin full of that sweet liquor that Euanthes<sup>120</sup> son,

5 Maron, had given me. He kept Apollo's<sup>121</sup> holy grove at Ismarus; for kindness we showed him there, and showed his wife and child, he gave me seven shining golden talents<sup>122</sup>

perfectly formed, a solid silver winebowl, and then this liquor—twelve two-handled jars of brandy, pure and fiery. Not a slave in Maron's household knew this drink; only

6 he, his wife and the storeroom mistress knew; and they would put one cupful—ruby-colored, honey-smooth—in twenty more of water, but still the sweet scent hovered like a fume

7 over the winebowl. No man turned away when cups of this came round.

A wineskin full I brought along, and victuals in a bag, for in my bones I knew some towering brute would be upon us soon—all outward power, a wild man, ignorant of civility.

8 We climbed, then, briskly to the cave. But Cyclops had gone afield, to pasture his fat sheep, so we looked round at everything inside:

a drying rack that sagged with cheeses, pens crowded with lambs and kids, each in its class: firstlings apart from middlings, and the 'dewdrops,' or newborn lambkins, penned apart from both. And vessels full of whey were brimming there—bowls of earthenware and pails for milking.

9 My men came pressing round me, pleading: 'Why not take these cheeses, get them stowed, come back, throw open all the pens, and make a run for it?

121. **Euanthes** (yōō-ān'thēz).  
122. **Apollo** (ə-pōl'ō): god of music, prophecy, and medicine.  
125. **talent**: a unit of money in ancient Greece.



We'll drive the kids and lambs aboard. We say  
put out again on good salt water!

Ah,

10 how sound that was! Yet I refused, I wished  
to see the cave man, what he had to offer—  
no pretty sight, it turned out, for my friends.

155

11 We lit a fire, burnt an offering,  
and took some cheese to eat; then sat in silence  
around the embers, waiting. When he came  
he had a load of dry boughs on his shoulder  
to stoke his fire at suppertime. He dumped it  
with a great crash into that hollow cave,  
and we all scattered fast to the far wall.

160

12 Then over the broad cavern floor he ushered  
the ewes he meant to milk. He left his rams

165

13 and he-goats in the yard outside, and swung  
high overhead a slab of solid rock  
to close the cave. Two dozen four-wheeled wagons,  
with heaving wagon teams, could not have stirred  
the tonnage of that rock from where he wedged it  
over the doorsill. Next he took his seat  
and milked his bleating ewes. A practiced job  
he made of it, giving each ewe her suckling;

170

14 thickened his milk, then, into curds and whey,  
sieved out the curds to drip in withy<sup>o</sup> baskets,  
and poured the whey to stand in bowls  
cooling until he drank it for his supper.  
When all these chores were done, he poked the fire,  
heaping on brushwood. In the glare he saw us.

175

175. **withy** (wīth'ē): made of  
slender twigs.

'Strangers,' he said, 'who are you? And where from?  
What brings you here by seaways—a fair traffic?

180

15 Or are you wandering rogues, who cast your lives  
like dice, and ravage other folk by sea?

We felt pressure on our hearts, in dread  
of that deep rumble and that mighty man  
But all the same I spoke up in reply:

185

'We are from Troy, Achaeans, blown off course  
by shifting gales on the Great South Sea;  
homeward bound, but taking routes and ways

10

**Why does Odysseus wish to stay?** He is curious about the cave man and wants "what he had to offer," the traditional gifts.

11

**Characterization.** Odysseus' respect for the gods, shown by his burning an offering, is in direct contrast to Cyclops' later defiance of gods in ll. 202–205.

12

Huge size of Cyclops' cave compares to that of cave on Crete still known as Cave of the Cyclops, which is large enough to hold 1,000 sheep and was used to hide Allied agents and weapons during World War II.

13

Description indicates great strength of Cyclops.

14

**Curds** are coagulated milk solids used to make cheese; **whey** is watery liquid that separates from curds during coagulation process.

15

**Simile.** Comparison of lives to dice suggests important role of fate in Greek thought.

16

Customs of guest-friendship and guest-gifts tied families and peoples together by means of reciprocal obligation.

17

Also known as Zeus Xenios, god of hospitality; Zeus, in disguise, found welcome only in home of Baucis and Philemon. Angered, he flooded remaining countryside.

18

Cyclops' response violates custom of hospitality.

19

**Characterization.** Cyclops' disrespect for gods and his instinctive reliance on force show his primitive nature.

20

*In what kind of contest are Odysseus and the Cyclops engaged?* A contest of wits.

21

**Homeric simile.** Extended comparison of Odysseus' men to squirming puppies emphasizes pathos of their situation.

22

**Simile.** Comparison of Cyclops to mountain lion supports previous comparison of Odysseus' men to puppies.

23

**Simile.** Cyclops is compared to huge mast of ship.

uncommon; so the will of Zeus would have it.  
We served under Agamemnon,<sup>o</sup> son of Atreus—  
the whole world knows what city  
he laid waste, what armies he destroyed.  
It was our luck to come here; here we stand,  
16 beholden for your help, or any gifts  
you give—as custom is to honor strangers.  
We would entreat you, great Sir, have a care  
17 for the gods' courtesy; Zeus will avenge  
the unoffending guest.'

He answered this  
from his brute chest, unmoved:

18 'You are a ninny,  
or else you come from the other end of nowhere,  
19 telling me, mind the gods! We Cyclopes  
care not a whistle for your thundering Zeus  
or all the gods in bliss; we have more force by far.  
I would not let you go for fear of Zeus—  
you or your friends—unless I had a whim to.  
20 Tell me, where was it, now, you left your ship—  
around the point, or down the shore, I wonder?'

He thought he'd find out, but I saw through this,  
and answered with a ready lie:

'My ship?  
Poseidon<sup>o</sup> Lord, who sets the earth a-tremble,  
broke it up on the rocks at your land's end.  
A wind from seaward served him, drove us there.  
We are survivors, these good men and I.'

Neither reply nor pity came from him,  
but in one stride he clutched at my companions  
21 and caught two in his hands like squirming puppies  
to beat their brains out, spattering the floor.  
Then he dismembered them and made his meal,  
22 gaping and crunching like a mountain lion—  
everything: innards, flesh, and marrowbones.  
We cried aloud, lifting our hands to Zeus,  
powerless, looking on at this, appalled;  
but Cyclops went on filling up his belly  
with manflesh and great gulps of whey,  
23 then lay down like a mast among his sheep.  
My heart beat high now at the chance of action,

190

191. **Agamemnon** (ăg'ă-mēm' nŏn'): Greek king who led the Greeks against the Trojans.

195

200

205

210

211. **Poseidon** (pō-sī'dən): god of the sea and of earthquakes.

215

220

225

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage may be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying the sequence of events. Explain that sequence of events is important in understanding a process such as the one Odysseus follows in making the

spike to blind the Cyclops. Ask students to read the passage and answer the following question: What did Odysseus do immediately after his men scraped the six-foot stake? **A.** Held pointed end in fire. (Incorrect. This is a later step.) **B.** Hewed six-foot section into handle. (Imprecise as did not

hew section into handle.) **C.** Hewed six-foot section into stake with pointed end. (Correct.) **D.** Found a second olive staff to make back-up stake. (Irrelevant. This is not mentioned in the selection.)

and drawing the sharp sword from my hip I went along his flank to stab him where the midriff holds the liver. I had touched the spot

230

- 24 when sudden fear stayed me; if I killed him we perished there as well, for we could never move his ponderous doorway slab aside. So we were left to groan and wait for morning.

- 25 When the young Dawn with fingertips of rose lit up the world, the Cyclops built a fire and milked his handsome ewes, all in due order, putting the sucklings to the mothers. Then, his chores being all dispatched, he caught another brace<sup>o</sup> of men to make his breakfast, and whisked away his great door slab to let his sheep go through—but he, behind,

235

240 240. **brace:** pair.

- 26 reset the stone as one would cap a quiver. There was a din of whistling as the Cyclops rounded his flock to higher ground, then stillness. And now I pondered how to hurt him worst, if but Athena<sup>a</sup> granted what I prayed for. Here are the means I thought would serve my turn:

245

247. **Athena** (ə-thē'nə): goddess of wisdom.

- A club, or staff, lay there along the fold—

- 27 an olive tree, felled green and left to season for Cyclops' hand. And it was like a mast a lugger of twenty oars, broad in the beam—a deep-sea-going craft—might carry: so long, so big around, it seemed. Now I chopped out a six-foot section of this pole and set it down before my men, who scraped it; and when they had it smooth, I hewed again to make a stake with pointed end. I held this in the fire's heart and turned it, toughening it, then hid it, well back in the cavern, under one of the dung piles in profusion there. ◀

250

255

- Now came the time to toss for it: who ventured along with me? whose hand could bear to thrust and grind that spike in Cyclops' eye, when mild sleep had mastered him? As luck would have it, the men I would have chosen won the toss—four strong men, and I made five as captain.

260 265

24

Odysseus shows reasonable restraint by considering consequences of hasty action.

25

**Metaphor.** "Fingertips of dawn" is an implied metaphor suggesting that dawn is a woman with rose-tipped fingers that stretch across morning sky; a recurring metaphor in *Odyssey*.

26

**Simile.** Emphasizes Cyclops' strength since capping a quiver—a holder for arrows—requires little effort.

27

Use of olive tree for club is significant because olive tree was sacred to Athena, Odysseus' patron deity.

28

**Why was Odysseus pleased with the results of the "chance" selection of the men who were to stab Cyclops' eye?** He would have chosen the same men; "luck" was on his side.



29

Suggests role of the gods, and thus of "fate," in determining eventual escape of Odysseus and his men.

30

**Irony.** Barbaric Cyclops' "orderly" completion of chores is ironic.

31

Description emphasizes Cyclops' barbarism.

32

**Diction.** Use of "fuddle and flush" creates image of intoxicated Cyclops.

33

Odysseus' giving his name as "Nohbdy" is cunning rather than honorable but saves him and his men; name also relates to **theme** of identity, for early in his travels Odysseus is a "nobody" without sense of identity and values.

34

**Irony.** Cyclops' "noble gift" is not noble at all but a betrayal of the hospitality he had promised.

At evening came the shepherd with his flock,  
his woolly flock. The rams as well, this time,  
entered the cave: by some sheepherding whim—

270

29 or a god's bidding—none were left outside.

He hefted his great boulder into place  
and sat him down to milk the bleating ewes

30 in proper order, put the lambs to suck,  
and swiftly ran through all his evening chores.

275

Then he caught two more men and feasted on them.

My moment was at hand, and I went forward  
holding an ivy bowl of my dark drink,  
looking up, saying:

'Cyclops, try some wine.

31 Here's liquor to wash down your scraps of men.

280

Taste it, and see the kind of drink we carried  
under our planks. I meant it for an offering  
if you would help us home. But you are mad,  
unbearable, a bloody monster! After this,  
will any other traveler come to see you?'

285

He seized and drained the bowl, and it went down  
so fiery and smooth he called for more:

'Give me another, thank you kindly. Tell me,  
how are you called? I'll make a gift will please you.  
Even Cyclopes know the wine grapes grow  
out of grassland and loam in heaven's rain,  
but here's a bit of nectar and ambrosia!'

290

292. **nectar and ambrosia** (ām-brō'zhə): drink and food of the Olympian gods.

Three bowls I brought him, and he poured them down.

32 I saw the fuddle and flush come over him,  
then I sang out in cordial tones:

'Cyclops,  
you ask my honorable name? Remember  
the gift you promised me, and I shall tell you.

295

33 My name is Nohbdy: mother, father, and friends,  
everyone calls me Nohbdy.'

And he said:

'Nohbdy's my meat, then, after I eat his friends.

300

34 Others come first. There's a noble gift, now.'

Even as he spoke, he reeled and tumbled backward,  
his great head lolling to one side; and sleep



*The Blinding of Cyclops.* Detail from Attic black-figure vase, sixth century B.C.

took him like any creature. Drunk, hiccuping,  
 35 he dribbled streams of liquor and bits of men.

305

36 Now, by the gods, I drove my big hand spike  
 deep in the embers, charring it again,  
 and cheered my men along with battle talk  
 to keep their courage up: no quitting now.

The pike of olive, green though it had been,

310

37 reddened and glowed as if about to catch.

I drew it from the coals and my four fellows  
 gave me a hand, lugging it near the Cyclops  
 as more than natural force nerved them; straight  
 forward they sprinted, lifted it, and rammed it  
 deep in his crater eye, and I leaned on it

315

38 turning it as a shipwright turns a drill

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

The archaic period of Greek art, which introduced an oriental influence into the earlier geometric style, extended from the seventh century to the early fifth century B.C. In all archaic painting, drawings were filled with solid color. In black-figure vase painting, designs were silhouetted in black slip (clay diluted with water to a liquid consistency) on light reddish clay surface.

35

Gruesome details again emphasize Cyclops' savage nature.

36

*How does Odysseus prepare his crew to be mentally ready for battle? What characteristic of Odysseus does this reveal?* He cheers men with battle talk. Shows leadership; Odysseus tries to instill in the men the courage needed to succeed.

37

*Imagery.* "Reddened and glowed" describes heated spike.

38

*Simile.* Spike is compared to large drill used by shipmaker.

39

Details are vividly gruesome—tactile sense of “red-hot bar” and seared lid and lashes, sounds of hissing and roots popping, sight of blood running.

40

**Homeric simile.** Cyclops’ hissing eyeball is compared to hot axhead steaming in cold water in blacksmith’s shop.

41

**Pun.** Word *sore* is used to mean “extremely” or “severely” and also to suggest pain of Cyclops’ “sore”—his eye socket.

42

*What is ironic about other Cyclopes implying that surely no mere man could “trick” and “ruin” Polyphemus?* That is exactly what Odysseus has done. (He will later use Polyphemus’ flocks to escape.)

43

**Irony.** When Polyphemus tells other Cyclopes that “Nohbdy” has ruined him, they believe “nobody” has harmed him.

44

Odysseus’ pride increases, **foreshadowing** the proud boasts that will bring Cyclops’ curse on him.

in planking, having men below to swing  
the two-handled strap that spins it in the groove.

So with our brand we bored that great eye socket

320

39 while blood ran out around the red-hot bar.

Eyelid and lash were seared; the pierced ball  
hissed broiling, and the roots popped.

In a smithy

40 one sees a white-hot axhead or an adz

plunged and wrung in a coldtub, screeching steam—

325

the way they make soft iron hale and hard:

just so that eyeball hissed around the spike.

The Cyclops bellowed and the rock roared round him,

and we fell back in fear. Clawing his face

330

he tugged the bloody spike out of his eye,

threw it away, and his wild hands went groping;

then he set up a howl for Cyclopes

who lived in caves on windy peaks nearby.

Some heard him; and they came by divers° ways

to clump around outside and call:

334. **divers** (dī’vɔrz): various.

‘What ails you,

335

41 Polyphemus?° Why do you cry so sore

in the starry night? You will not let us sleep.

42 Sure no man’s driving off your flock? No man

has tricked you, ruined you?’

Out of the cave

the mammoth Polyphemus roared in answer:

340

43 ‘Nohbdy, Nohbdy’s tricked me, Nohbdy’s ruined me!’

To this rough shout they made a sage reply:

‘Ah well, if nobody has played you foul

there in your lonely bed, we are no use in pain

given by great Zeus. Let it be your father,

345

Poseidon Lord, to whom you pray.’

So saying

44 they trailed away. And I was filled with laughter

to see how like a charm the name deceived them.

Now Cyclops, wheezing as the pain came on him,

fumbled to wrench away the great doorstone

350

and squatted in the breach with arms thrown wide

for any silly beast or man who bolted—

hoping somehow I might be such a fool.



But I kept thinking how to win the game:  
 death sat there huge; how could we slip away?  
 I drew on all my wits, and ran through tactics,  
 reasoning as a man will for dear life,  
 until a trick came—and it pleased me well.  
 The Cyclops' rams were handsome, fat, with heavy  
 fleeces, a dark violet.

355

Three abreast

360

I tied them silently together, twining  
 45 cords of willow from the ogre's bed;  
 then slung a man under each middle one  
 to ride there safely, shielded left and right.

46 So three sheep could convey each man. I took  
 the woolliest ram, the choicest of the flock  
 and hung myself under his kinky belly,  
 pulled up tight, with fingers twisted deep  
 in sheepskin ringlets for an iron grip.  
 So, breathing hard, we waited until morning.

365

370

47 When Dawn spread out her fingertips of rose  
 the rams began to stir, moving for pasture,  
 and peals of bleating echoed round the pens  
 where dams with udders full called for a milking.  
 Blinded, and sick with pain from his head wound,  
 the master stroked each ram, then let it pass,  
 but my men riding on the pectoral<sup>o</sup> fleece  
 the giant's blind hands blundering never found.  
 Last of them all my ram, the leader, came,  
 weighted by wool and me with my meditations.  
 The Cyclops patted him, and then he said:

375

377. **pectoral** (pĕk'tər-əl): on  
 the chest.

'Sweet cousin ram, why lag behind the rest  
 in the night cave? You never linger so,  
 but graze before them all, and go afar  
 to crop sweet grass, and take your stately way  
 leading along the streams, until at evening  
 you run to be the first one in the fold.

385

48 Why, now, so far behind? Can you be grieving  
 over your Master's eye? That carrion rogue<sup>o</sup>  
 and his accurst companions burnt it out  
 when he had conquered all my wits with wine.

390

389. **carrion** (kār'e-an) **rogue**:  
 rotten scoundrel.

49 Nohbdy will not get out alive, I swear.  
 Oh, had you brain and voice to tell

45

**Ogre:** man-eating giant of myth  
 and fable.

46

**Symbol.** Odysseus' riding under  
 "the choicest of the flock" is ap-  
 propriate to his position as leader  
 and symbolizes personal contest  
 between him and Cyclops.

47

**Repetition.** This metaphor is re-  
 peated throughout poem. Repe-  
 titio is common mnemonic  
 device in the primary epic.

48

**Irony.** Instead of grieving over  
 Cyclops' eye, ram allows Odys-  
 seus to escape.

49

Although Odysseus gets out  
 alive, he will leave his identity as  
 "Nohbdy" behind when he  
 proudly, yet foolishly, shouts his  
 name in ll. 442–443.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

In the early fifth century B.C., vase painters replaced black-figure with red-figure technique in which the background is painted black, leaving the light red clay for three-dimensional drawings. Two-handed jars, the graceful amphora and wider-bottomed pelike, were used to store food and other provisions such as the wine that Odysseus served the Cyclops Polyphemus.



*Odysseus Escapes from the Cave of Polyphemus Beneath the Belly of a Ram.*  
Detail from Attic red-figured vase, c. 475 B.C.

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

50

Polyphemus seeks relief from his pain; revenge will not heal his eye but will calm his rage.

where he may be now, dodging all my fury!

50 Bashed by this hand and bashed on this rock wall  
his brains would strew the floor, and I should have  
rest from the outrage Nohbdy worked upon me.'

395

He sent us into the open, then. Close by,  
 I dropped and rolled clear of the ram's belly,  
 going this way and that to untie the men. 400

51 With many glances back, we rounded up  
 his fat, stiff-legged sheep to take aboard,  
 and drove them down to where the good ship lay.  
 We saw, as we came near, our fellows' faces  
 52 shining; then we saw them turn to grief 405  
 tallying those who had not fled from death.  
 I hushed them, jerking head and eyebrows up,  
 53 and in a low voice told them: 'Load this herd;  
 move fast, and put the ship's head toward the breakers.'  
 They all pitched in at loading, then embarked 410  
 and struck their oars into the sea. Far out,  
 as far offshore as shouted words would carry,  
 I sent a few back to the adversary:

54 'O Cyclops! Would you feast on my companions?  
 Puny, am I, in a cave man's hands? 415  
 How do you like the beating that we gave you,  
 you damned cannibal? Eater of guests  
 under your roof! Zeus and the gods have paid you!'

The blind thing in his doubled fury broke  
 55 a hilltop in his hands and heaved it after us, 420  
 Ahead of our black prow it struck and sank  
 whelmed in a spuming geyser, a giant wave  
 that washed the ship stern foremost back to shore.  
 I got the longest boathook out and stood  
 fending us off, with furious nods to all 425  
 to put their backs into a racing stroke—  
 row, row, or perish. So the long oars bent  
 kicking the foam sternward, making head  
 until we drew away, and twice as far.  
 Now when I cupped my hands I heard the crew 430  
 in low voices protesting:

56 'Godsake, Captain!  
 Why bait the beast again? Let him alone!'

'That tidal wave he made on the first throw  
 all but beached us.'

'All but stove us in!'  
 'Give him our bearing with your trumpeting, 435

51  
 Irony. Odysseus and his men seize their own "gifts" (the sheep). Cyclops had in mind a different kind of "gift."

52  
 Feelings of grief over loss of human life steadily increase in epic.

53  
 Characterization. Odysseus displays his leadership abilities in organizing a hasty departure.

54  
*What fault does Odysseus show by mocking the blind Cyclops?* Senseless pride. He considers episode a contest and cannot resist taunting the "loser."

55  
 According to legend, stones off the western shore of Crete are those thrown by Cyclops.

56  
 For second time, Odysseus' men give him sensible advice that he refuses to take; earlier he refused to leave before seeing Cyclops and receiving "gifts." Now his pride exposes them to possibility of immediate destruction.



57

**Characterization.** Odysseus proclaims his identity proudly but recklessly.

58

Ancient Greeks believed strongly in fate and prophecy; prophets such as Telemus were respected in civilized lands, but Cyclops has ignored Telemus' warnings.

59

**What characteristic does the Cyclops show in belittling Odysseus?** Cyclops, like Odysseus, is proud.

60

**Irony.** Cyclops means just the opposite, as shown by his curse in ll. 467–476.

61

Odysseus should heed warnings of his men and Cyclops, but he continues his proud and reckless tauntings in defiance of Greek value of moderation.

he'll get the range and lob a boulder.'

'Aye!

He'll smash our timbers and our heads together!'

57 I would not heed them in my glorying spirit,  
but let my anger flare and yelled:

'Cyclops,

if ever mortal man inquire

440

how you were put to shame and blinded, tell him

Odysseus, raider of cities, took your eye:

Laertes' son, whose home's on Ithaca!'

At this he gave a mighty sob and rumbled:

'Now comes the weird° upon me, spoken of old.

445

445. **weird:** fate or destiny.

58 A wizard, grand and wondrous, lived here—Telemus,

a son of Eurymus; great length of days

he had in wizardry among the Cyclopes,

and these things he foretold for time to come:

my great eye lost, and at Odysseus' hands.

450

Always I had in mind some giant, armed

in giant force, would come against me here.

59 But this, but you—small, pitiful and twiggy—

you put me down with wine, you blinded me.

60 Come back, Odysseus, and I'll treat you well,

455

praying the god of earthquake° to befriend you—

his son I am, for he by his avowal

fathered me, and, if he will, he may

heal me of this black wound—he and no other

of all the happy gods or mortal men.'

460

456. **god of earthquake:** Poseidon.

61 Few words I shouted in reply to him:

'If I could take your life I would and take

your time away, and hurl you down to hell!

The god of earthquake could not heal you there!'

At this he stretched his hands out in his darkness

465

toward the sky of stars, and prayed Poseidon:

'O hear me, lord, blue girdler of the islands,

if I am thine indeed, and thou art father:

62 grant that Odysseus, raider of cities, never  
 63 see his home: Laertes' son, I mean, 470  
 who kept his hall on Ithaca. Should destiny  
 intend that he shall see his roof again  
 among his family in his fatherland,  
 far be that day, and dark the years between.  
 64 Let him lose all companions, and return 475  
 under strange sail to bitter days at home.'

In these words he prayed, and the god heard him.  
 Now he laid hands upon a bigger stone  
 65 and wheeled around, titanic for the cast, 480  
 to let it fly in the black-prowed vessel's track.  
 But it fell short, just aft the steering oar,  
 and whelming seas rose giant above the stone  
 to bear us onward toward the island.

There  
 as we ran in we saw the squadron waiting,  
 the trim ships drawn up side by side, and all 485  
 our troubled friends who waited, looking seaward.  
 We beached her, grinding keel in the soft sand,  
 and waded in, ourselves, on the sandy beach.  
 Then we unloaded all the Cyclops' flock

66 to make division, share and share alike, 490  
 only my fighters voted that my ram,  
 the prize of all, should go to me. I slew him  
 by the seaside and burnt his long thighbones

67 to Zeus beyond the stormcloud, Cronus' son,<sup>o</sup> 495  
 who rules the world. But Zeus disdained my offering:

68 destruction for my ships he had in store  
 and death for those who sailed them, my companions.  
 Now all day long until the sun went down  
 we made our feast on mutton and sweet wine,  
 till after sunset in the gathering dark 500  
 we went to sleep above the wash of ripples.

When the young Dawn with fingertips of rose  
 touched the world, I roused the men, gave orders  
 to man the ships, cast off the mooring lines;  
 and filing in to sit beside the rowlocks 505  
 oarsmen in line dipped oars in the gray sea.

69 So we moved out, sad in the vast offing,  
 having our precious lives, but not our friends.

494. **Cronus' son:** Cronus (krō'nās) was a Titan who ruled the universe before Zeus.

62  
 Cyclops' first request will not be granted.

63  
 Cyclops states Odysseus' full identity—name, parentage, and home—to assure curse's efficacy.

64  
**Foreshadowing.** Remainder of epic fulfills Cyclops' curse; Odysseus will lose all his men and ships and will return to Ithaca in ship of King Alcinous of Phaeacia.

65  
 "Titanic" is appropriate here not only because it suggests great size but also because Cyclopes are descendants of Uranus and Gaea, who also bore Titans.

66  
*How does Odysseus divide the Cyclops' sheep? What characteristic does this show?* Every man gets equal share. Shows fairness.

67  
**Epithet.** "Cronus' son, who rules the world" characterizes Zeus.

68  
 Odysseus shows respect for laws of gods by offering ram to Zeus, but Cyclops' curse has already decided Odysseus' fate; even gods could not change curses, prophecies, fate.

69  
 Odysseus' mourning for his friends emphasizes his growing humanity.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify qualities of Odysseus' character illustrated in this selection and to explain how these characteristics contribute to his stature as a hero.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

To provide reinforcement, show students the filmstrip series *Homer's Mythology: Tracing a Tradition* from Guidance Associates. Individual filmstrips in the series are "Homer's World," "The *Iliad*," and "The *Odyssey*."

Students might enjoy keeping a journal or notebook as they read the *Odyssey*. Entries might include definitions of literary terms, background facts, identification of place names and characters, answers to study questions, and personal reactions to characters and events.

## READING CHECK

1. They have been drinking and feasting and are outnumbered (pp. 600–601).
2. They forget their home and wish to remain with Lotus-Eaters (p. 602).
3. Ship has been wrecked (p. 606).
4. Cannot move rock at door (p. 607).
5. He says Nohbdy has tricked him (p. 610).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. They are fierce, brave warriors. Odysseus wisely wants to leave, but greedy, disobedient men choose to linger.
2. Caution, intelligence, and leadership.
3. Responses will vary. Lines 77–84 show that men are trying to escape problems elsewhere or that desire to stay is drug-induced.
4. They do not have laws, cultivated land, community, or hospitality.
5. He calls Odysseus a ninny, butchers two men, gives Odysseus "gift" of eating him last.
6. He stays on island to see cave man; shouts insults to Cyclops because full of "glorying spirit."
7. He sharpens olive pole, makes Cyclops drunk, gives his name as Nohbdy, blinds Cyclops with his pole, and escapes with his men under the sheep.
8. Leadership, curiosity, shrewdness, strength, pride, defiance.
- 9a. Lines 471–476. 9b. Readers wonder about Odysseus' adventures, his men, the "strange sail," and his "bitter" homecoming.

## Reading Check

1. Why are Odysseus' men vulnerable when the Cicones attack?
2. What happens to the men who eat the Lotus plant?
3. When the Cyclops asks about his ship, what does Odysseus tell him?
4. Why does Odysseus refrain from killing the Cyclops?
5. Why do none of the other Cyclopes come when Polyphemus cries for help?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Epic

1. Odysseus begins his narrative when he and his men set sail from Troy. What does the episode of the Cicones reveal about Odysseus and his men?
2. Almost all of the adventures in the *Odyssey* illustrate some aspect of Odysseus' character. What specific characteristics are revealed in the episode of the Lotus-Eaters?
3. The land of the Lotus-Eaters has been said to symbolize *escapism*—that is, withdrawal from reality into a dream world. Do you agree? If you do, point out lines that support your view. If you do not, give reasons for your opinion.
4. Why does Odysseus consider the Cyclopes barbarians?

5. Hospitality to strangers is a theme that recurs throughout the *Odyssey*. The ancient Greeks believed that the gods themselves sometimes came to earth disguised as humble strangers. How does the Cyclops respond to Odysseus' plea for hospitality?

6. Twice in the Cyclops episode Odysseus brings misfortune upon himself and his men by ignoring their good advice. Identify both instances and tell why Odysseus acts as he does.

7. Odysseus devises a plan that enables him and his men to escape from the Cyclops' cave and to prevent anyone coming to the Cyclops' aid. What is each stage of the plan?

8. What aspects of Odysseus' character are revealed in the incident with the Cyclops?

9. Reread the Cyclops' prayer to Poseidon (lines 467–476). a. What lines suggest that Odysseus will have to face other trials? b. How does this foreshadowing add to the suspense of the poem?



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to evaluate how Odysseus changes during his encounters with the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, and the Cattle of the Sun God. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. For discussion of *Circean*, *siren*, and to *pass between Scylla and Charybdis*, see the **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 630.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students if they have ever been in a dilemma in which they had two choices—neither of which was desirable. Then request they read the selection to determine Odysseus' dilemma and see how he resolves it.

### The Sirens

*Odysseus and his crew arrive next at the island of Aeolus (ēō'a-las), god of the winds, who helps them homeward by bottling up unfavorable winds and sending them a fair breeze. After nine days' sail, with Ithaca in sight, the men untie the bag of winds, and their ships are blown straight back to Aeolus' island. Realizing that their voyage is cursed by the gods, Aeolus drives them away.*

*In the land of the Laestrygonians (lē's trī-gō'nē-anz), a race of cannibals, all the ships but one are destroyed and their crews devoured. Odysseus' own ship escapes and proceeds to the island of Aeaea, where the goddess Circe transforms Odysseus' men into swine. After Circe releases his men from the spell, Odysseus spends a year with her. He longs however, to return to Ithaca. Odysseus sails to the land of the dead, where the ghost of the blind prophet Tiresias (tī-rē'sē-is) tells him what he must do to reach home. Before setting sail for Ithaca, Odysseus returns briefly to Circe's island. She warns him of the dangers that lie ahead, and Odysseus tells his men what Circe has predicted.*

Detail from *Ulysses at the Palace of Circe* (1667) by Willem Schubert van Ehrenberg. Oil on canvas. The painting shows Odysseus' men being transformed into animals. The J. Paul Getty Museum



### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote summarizes the adventures of Odysseus and his men from the time they leave the land of the Cyclopes until they set sail from Circe's island. Circe warns Odysseus of the dangers he will encounter on his trip homeward to Ithaca. This section of the *Odyssey* opens with Odysseus warning his men about the predicted encounter with the Sirens. Who exactly are the Sirens? How will they attempt to prevent Odysseus and his men from reaching their homeland?

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### About the Artist

Willem Schubert van Ehrenberg, a Flemish painter, specialized in architectural scenes. His baroque style and penchant for display and exaggeration are appropriate for scenes of the sorceress Circe, who changed men into animals.

#### Exploring the Subject

Circe was the daughter of Helios, the god of the sun, and Perse, a sea nymph. When Odysseus and his men landed on Circe's island, she turned the men into pigs, but Hermes, the patron god of travelers, had given Odysseus a magic plant called moly, which made Odysseus impervious to Circe's spells. Odysseus forced Circe to restore his men to normal. She relented and then fell in love with Odysseus. He stayed with her for a year, and Circe bore him a son named Telegonus. When Odysseus departed, Circe warned him of several dangers that he would face, including the dreaded Sirens who lived on the island of Capri. Circe advised Odysseus to have his men plug their ears with wax so they wouldn't be drawn in by the Sirens' song.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Odysseus is delayed by ill winds, cannibals, and Circe. After listening to Circe's warnings, he sets sail for home. Circe's predictions begin to come true as he passes the island of the Sirens.

### The Sirens

After students have read "The Sirens," the margin annotations will assist you in explaining the character development of Odysseus and the roles played by the gods and goddesses.

1

Daughter of Helios, Circe was banished from Colchis for murdering her husband to obtain his kingdom. She was a beautiful but cruel enchantress.

2

Severin has identified Circe's island as the Isle of Paxos near mainland Greece.

3

**Point of view.** "I" reminds readers that Odysseus is telling tale of his journey to Phaeacian court, which he has reached safely although he has lost his crew.

4

Sails rounded out in belly shape by breeze enable ship to sail fast but smoothly.

5

**On which of Circe's warnings does Odysseus dwell? Why does Odysseus emphasize this part of her forecast?** Stresses danger of Sirens' song. It is not as frightening as revelations about Scylla and Charybdis.

6

**Epithet.** Helios is "lord of high noon." Reference to Helios connects narratives of Helios' daughter Circe and upcoming episode of Helios' cattle.

## PRESENTATION

Explain that the *Odyssey* was recited long before it was written down. To help students appreciate the natural speech rhythms of Robert Fitzgerald's translation, assign several students to read the speeches of Odysseus (ll. 522–535, 602–618,

674–679, 736–739), two students to read in unison the Sirens' song (ll. 556–581), and others to read Eurylochus' plea (ll. 700–715) and the dialogue between Helios and Zeus (ll. 744–756). You may want to read aloud Odysseus' main narrative or assign it to an outstanding reader.

1 As Circe spoke, Dawn mounted her golden throne,  
and on the first rays Circe left me, taking 510

2 her way like a great goddess up the island.

3 I made straight for the ship, roused up the men  
to get aboard and cast off at the stern.

They scrambled to their places by the rowlocks  
and all in line dipped oars in the gray sea.  
But soon an offshore breeze blew to our liking—

515

4 a canvas-bellying breeze, a lusty shipmate  
sent by the singing nymph with sunbright hair.°

518. **nymph . . . hair:** Circe.

So we made fast the braces, and we rested,  
letting the wind and steersman work the ship.

520

The crew being now silent before me, I  
addressed them, sore at heart:

‘Dear friends,

more than one man, or two, should know those things  
Circe foresaw for us and shared with me,

525

so let me tell her forecast: then we die  
with our eyes open, if we are going to die,  
or know what death we baffle if we can. Sirens  
weaving a haunting song over the sea

we are to shun, she said, and their green shore  
all sweet with clover; yet she urged that I

530

alone should listen to their song. Therefore  
you are to tie me up, tight as a splint,  
erect along the mast, lashed to the mast,

and if I shout and beg to be untied,  
take more turns of the rope to muffle me.’

535

5 I rather dwelt on this part of the forecast,  
while our good ship made time, bound outward down  
the wind for the strange island of Sirens.

Then all at once the wind fell, and a calm  
came over all the sea, as though some power  
lulled the swell.

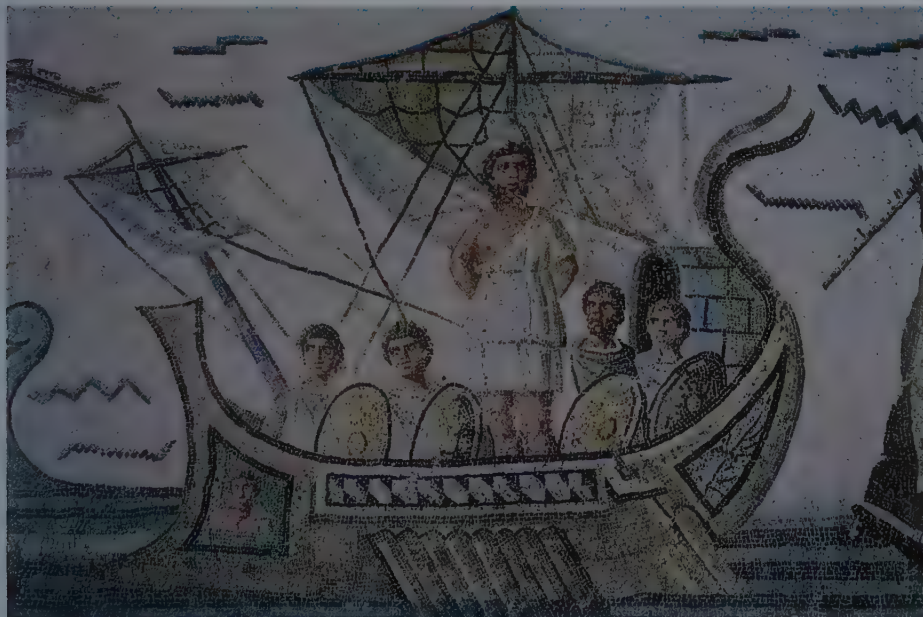
540

The crew were on their feet  
briskly, to furl the sail, and stow it; then,  
each in place, they poised the smooth oar blades  
and sent the white foam scudding by. I carved  
a massive cake of beeswax into bits  
and rolled them in my hands until they softened—  
no long task, for a burning heat came down

545

6 from Helios,° lord of high noon. Going forward

548. **Helios** (hē'lē-ōs'): the sun god.



Ulysses and his companions passing the island of the Sirens.  
Roman mosaic, third century A.D.

I carried wax along the line, and laid it  
 7 thick on their ears. They tied me up, then, plumb 550  
 amidships, back to the mast, lashed to the mast,  
 and took themselves again to rowing. Soon,  
 as we came smartly within hailing distance,  
 8 the two Sirens, noting our fast ship  
 off their point, made ready, and they sang: 555

‘This way; oh turn your bows,  
 9 Achaea’s glory,  
 As all the world allows—  
 10 Moor and be merry.

Sweet coupled airs we sing. 560  
 No lonely seafarer  
 Holds clear of entering  
 11 Our green mirror.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

Early Greek mosaics of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. used natural pebbles. The cube technique was introduced in the early Hellenistic period after the conquests of Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.). Mosaic pictures on walls and floors were popular in Rome from the first century B.C. through the fourth century A.D.

7  
*Why do Odysseus’ men tie him to the mast as they near the island of the Sirens? To keep him from succumbing to the song of Sirens.*

8  
**Symbol.** According to some critics, Sirens represent knowledge which, here, only Odysseus will acquire. Other critics suggest Sirens symbolize temptation and loss of self-control.

9  
 One temptation is that of glory. Achaea is area in northern Greece.

10  
 Like Lotus-Eaters whose flowers caused forgetfulness of home, Sirens’ song tempts listener to forget home and seek pleasure.

11  
**Symbol.** Image of “green mirror” may suggest that sirens present each person with a reflection of that individual’s deepest desire.



12

**Simile.** Purling (rippling) note has smooth, sweet quality that flows from voice to voice.

13

**Theme.** Suggests theme of self-knowledge.

14

Sirens are tempting Odysseus with promises of joy and knowledge.

15

*What do Odysseus' men do when he demands that they free him?* They tie him more securely.

16

Having heard neither Circe's warnings nor the Sirens' song, Odysseus' men are blissfully ignorant of their future.

17

Odysseus is literally freed from mast, but "free" here may also indicate that Odysseus now realizes his freedom of choice involves responsibility for his men as well as himself.

12 Pleased by each purling note

Like honey twining

565

From her throat and my throat,

Who lies a-pining?

Sea rovers here take joy

Voyaging onward,

570

As from our song of Troy

Graybeard and rower-boy

13 Goeth more learnèd.

All feats on that great field

In the long warfare,

575

Dark days the bright gods willed,

Wounds you bore there,

Argos' old soldiery°

On Troy beach teeming,

Charmed out of time we see.

577. **Argos' old soldiery:** the soldiers from Argos, a city in ancient Greece, who fought in the Trojan War.

No life on earth can be

580

14 Hid from our dreaming.'

The lovely voices in ardor appealing over the water made me crave to listen, and I tried to say

'Untie me!' to the crew, jerking my brows;

but they bent steady to the oars. Then Perimedes°

585

got to his feet, he and Eurylochus,°

585. **Perimedes**(pér-'a-mē'dēz).

15 and passed more line about, to hold me still.

586. **Eurylochus**(yōō-rīl'ā-kas).

So all rowed on, until the Sirens

dropped under the sea rim, and their singing

dwindled away.

My faithful company

590

rested on their oars now, peeling off

16 the wax that I had laid thick on their ears;

17 then set me free.

## Scylla and Charybdis

*Circe has warned Odysseus of another sea peril. He and his crew must pass between Scylla (sīl'ə) and Charybdis (kə-rib'dīs). Scylla is a terrifying monster with six heads. She dwells in a high rocky cave, devouring sailors in ships that pass close by. Charybdis is a whirlpool. Three times a day she swallows the sea, then vomits it up fiery hot. Circe has advised Odysseus to sail toward Scylla's crag, for it is better to lose six of his men—one to each of her heads—than for all to perish in the whirlpool.*

But scarcely had that island  
faded in blue air than I saw smoke  
and white water, with sound of waves in tumult— 595  
a sound the men heard, and it terrified them.  
Oars flew from their hands; the blades went knocking  
wild alongside till the ship lost way,  
with no oarblades to drive her through the water.

Well, I walked up and down from bow to stern, 600  
1 trying to put heart into them, standing over  
2 every oarsman, saying gently,  
‘Friends,  
have we never been in danger before this?  
More fearsome is it now, than when the Cyclops  
penned us in his cave? What power he had! 605  
Did I not keep my nerve, and use my wits  
to find a way out for us?

Now I say  
3 by hook or crook this peril too shall be  
something that we remember.

Heads up, lads!  
We must obey the orders as I give them, 610  
Get the oarshafts in your hands, and lay back  
hard on your benches; hit these breaking seas.  
Zeus help us pull away before we founder.  
You at the tiller, listen, and take in  
all that I say—the rudders are your duty; 615  
keep her out of the combers and the smoke;  
4 steer for that headland; watch the drift, or we  
fetch up in the smother, and you drown us.’

That was all, and it brought them round to action.  
5 But as I sent them on toward Scylla, I 620

### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote explains Circe's warning about Scylla, a six-headed monster, and Charybdis, a whirlpool. Circe advises Odysseus to risk losing one man to each head of Scylla rather than jeopardize the entire crew by sailing toward Charybdis. Will Odysseus follow Circe's advice?

### Scylla and Charybdis

After students have read "Scylla and Charybdis," the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion of Odysseus' character.

1 **Figurative language.** Figurative meaning of *heart* here is "courage and hope."

2 **What attitude does Odysseus show toward his men?** He is concerned.

3 **Irony.** Odysseus does remember these events, as shown in his tale, but his men do not live to remember.

4 **Headland:** a promontory; a point of land with a high drop extending out into a body of water.

5 **A beautiful maiden who was turned into a monster by Circe (or perhaps by Amphitrite, the wife of Poseidon), Scylla has the necks and heads of six barking dogs.**

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In most ceramic vases of the Hellenistic period (330–100 B.C.), the earlier style of painted ornaments was replaced by appliquéd reliefs cast from molds. The relief on the vase in the photograph represents Scylla's metamorphosis from sea nymph to monster. Her upper body remained a beautiful maiden while her lower body was encircled with serpents and fierce dogs' heads. In her misery, she attacked seamen, such as those of Odysseus' ship, and devoured them. Scylla later became rooted to a rock. Still treacherous to sailors, a rock in the sea between Italy and Sicily bears Scylla's name. She was situated opposite another feared creature, Charybdis. He lived on a nearby rock and sucked in the sea three times a day, sometimes taking a whole ship and its men underwater, where they were lost forever. Charybdis today is identified as the narrow Strait of Messina, which is marked by whirlpools and strong tidal currents.

### About the Artwork

The Hellenistic period began with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C. and lasted until the Romans conquered Greece in 146 B.C. It was an unsettled era in Greek history, marked by constant warfare with neighboring lands. Artists of the time frequently returned to mythological figures for subject matter, although many people had long since ceased to believe in the myths.



The Monster Scylla. Ceramic vase, early Hellenistic period, third century B.C.  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, H. L. Pierce Fund



6 told them nothing, as they could do nothing.  
 They would have dropped their oars again, in panic,  
 to roll for cover under the decking. Circe's  
 bidding against arms had slipped my mind,  
 so I tied on my cuirass<sup>o</sup> and took up  
 two heavy spears, then made my way along  
 to the foredeck—thinking to see her first from there,  
 7 the monster of the gray rock, harboring  
 torment for my friends. I strained my eyes  
 upon that cliffside veiled in cloud, but nowhere  
 could I catch sight of her.

625 625. **cuirass** (kwī-rās'): armor  
 for the chest and back.

And all this time,  
 in travail, sobbing, gaining on the current,  
 8 we rowed into the strait—Scylla to port  
 and on our starboard beam Charybdis, dire  
 gorge<sup>o</sup> of the salt-sea tide. By heaven! when she  
 vomited, all the sea was like a caldron  
 seething over intense fire, when the mixture  
 suddenly heaves and rises.

630

635 635. **gorge**: devouring mouth.

The shot spume  
 soared to the landside heights, and fell like rain.

But when she swallowed the sea water down  
 we saw the funnel of the maelstrom,<sup>o</sup> heard  
 the rock bellowing all around, and dark  
 sand raged on the bottom far below.  
 My men all blanched against the gloom, our eyes  
 were fixed upon that yawning mouth in fear  
 of being devoured.

640

641. **maelstrom** (māl'strəm):  
 violent whirlpool.

Then Scylla made her strike,  
 whisking six of my best men from the ship.  
 I happened to glance aft at ship and oarsmen  
 and caught sight of their arms and legs, dangling  
 high overhead. Voices came down to me  
 9 in anguish, calling my name for the last time.

645

650

10 A man surf-casting on a point of rock  
 for bass or mackerel, whipping his long rod  
 to drop the sinker and the bait far out,  
 will hook a fish and rip it from the surface  
 to dangle wriggling through the air:

655

so these  
 were borne aloft in spasms toward the cliff.

6  
*Why does Odysseus not tell his men about the upcoming dangers?* They could do nothing and would have panicked and hidden.

7  
*Epithet.* Scylla is referred to as "the monster of the gray rock."

8  
 Even today, the phrase "between Scylla and Charybdis" indicates a horrible dilemma.

9  
 The men's calling of Odysseus' name suggests his responsibility for their deaths; through the death of the six, however, he is able to save the remainder of the crew.

10  
*Homeric simile.* Lines 652–656 contain one of the most vivid similes in the epic; here, Scylla is compared to fisherman, and the men are compared to helpless fish.

**11**  
**Characterization.** Odysseus' pity for plight of his men is much more intense than on previous occasions.

**12**  
The "Rocks" are Clashing Rocks through which Jason had passed. Odysseus had feared them, choosing instead the route between Scylla and Charybdis.

#### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote explains Circe's warning to Odysseus to avoid the island of Thrinacia. His men, however, are determined to land there. What will happen if the cattle of the sun god are harmed? Will Odysseus' men obey his order not to touch the cattle?

#### The Cattle of the Sun God

After students have read "The Cattle of the Sun God," the margin annotations will help you in guiding the discussion of the role of the gods and goddesses in Odysseus' adventures.

**1**  
Zeus's sending bad weather suggests that entire episode of Helios' cattle was fated, perhaps as result of Cyclops' curse.

**2**  
Sun gods Helios and Apollo are reputed to own the cattle.

**3**  
**Complication.** Continuing bad weather suggests further role of gods and fate in tempting Odysseus' men to kill Helios' cattle.

She ate them as they shrieked there, in her den,  
in the dire grapple, reaching still for me—  
**11** and deathly pity ran me through 660  
at that sight—far the worst I ever suffered,  
questing the passes of the strange sea.  
We rowed on.  
**12** The Rocks were now behind; Charybdis, too,  
and Scylla dropped astern. . . .

#### The Cattle of the Sun God

*Odysseus urges his exhausted crew to bypass Thrinacia (thrĭn-ā'sh ), the island of the sun god. The men, however, insist on landing. Odysseus makes them swear not to touch the god's cattle, for both Circe and Tiresias have warned him of disaster if the cattle are harmed.*

In the small hours of the third watch, when stars 665  
that shone out in the first dusk of evening  
had gone down to their setting, a giant wind  
**1**blew from heaven, and clouds driven by Zeus  
shrouded land and sea in a night of storm;  
so, just as Dawn with fingertips of rose 670  
touched the windy world, we dragged our ship  
to cover in a grotto, a sea cave  
where nymphs had chairs of rock and sanded floors.  
I mustered all the crew and said:  
    'Old shipmates,  
our stores are in the ship's hold, food and drink; 675  
the cattle here are not for our provision,  
or we pay dearly for it.  
Fierce the god is  
**2**who cherishes these heifers and these sheep:  
Helios; and no man avoids his eye.'  
To this my fighters nodded. Yes. But now 680  
**3**we had a month of onshore gales, blowing  
day in, day out—south winds, or south by east.  
As long as bread and good red wine remained  
to keep the men up, and appease their craving,  
they would not touch the cattle. But in the end, 685  
when all the barley in the ship was gone,  
hunger drove them to scour the wild shore

with angling hooks, for fishes and seafowl,  
whatever fell into their hands; and lean days  
wore their bellies thin.

The storms continued

690

4 So one day I withdrew to the interior  
to pray the gods in solitude, for hope  
that one might show me some way of salvation.  
Slipping away, I struck across the island  
to a sheltered spot, out of the driving gale.  
I washed my hands there, and made supplication  
to the gods who own Olympus,<sup>o</sup> all the gods—  
5 but they, for answer, only closed my eyes  
under slow drops of sleep.

695

697. **Olympus** (ô-lîm'pəs):  
Mount Olympus, believed to be  
the home of the gods.

6 Now on the shore Eurylochus  
made his insidious plea:

'Comrades,' he said,

700

'You've gone through everything; listen to what I say.  
All deaths are hateful to us, mortal wretches,  
7 but famine is the most pitiful, the worst  
end that a man can come to.

Will you fight it?

705

Come, we'll cut out the noblest of these cattle  
for sacrifice to the gods who own the sky;  
and once at home, in the old country of Ithaca,  
if ever that day comes—

we'll build a costly temple and adorn it  
with every beauty for the Lord of Noon.<sup>o</sup>

710

710. **Lord of Noon:** Helios.

But if he flares up over his heifers lost,  
wishing our ship destroyed, and if the gods  
make cause with him, why, then I say: Better  
open your lungs to a big sea once for all  
than waste to skin and bones on a lonely island!

715

8 Thus Eurylochus; and they murmured 'Aye!'  
trooping away at once to round up heifers.

Now, that day tranquil cattle with broad brows  
were grazing near, and soon the men drew up  
around their chosen beasts in ceremony.

720

9 They plucked the leaves that shone on a tall oak—  
having no barley meal—to strew the victims,  
performed the prayers and ritual, knifed the kine<sup>o</sup>  
and flayed each carcass, cutting thighbones free  
to wrap in double folds of fat. These offerings,

725

723. **kine:** cattle.

4

Odysseus' withdrawal keeps him  
from preventing slaughter of cat-  
tle but absolves him of any per-  
sonal responsibility and thus  
saves him from Helios' curse.

5

Odysseus' supernatural sleep  
suggests that destruction of He-  
lios' cattle and later destruction  
of Odysseus' men was fated.

6

**Characterization.** Although cer-  
tain events in this episode seem  
fated, Eurylochus makes a con-  
scious choice for which he will be  
held responsible.

7

**According to Eurylochus, what  
is the worst death?** Death by  
famine.

8

By agreeing with Eurylochus, the  
men also become responsible for  
their actions.

9

**Description.** The men try to ap-  
pease gods by traditional ritualis-  
tic sacrifice, first instituted by  
Prometheus, who tricked Zeus  
into choosing fat and bones for  
his portion.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artwork

Note the slight cracks in the plaster surface of Tibaldi's mural. Murals are usually painted on walls covered with plaster, using a technique known as fresco painting. The fresco artist covers a small portion of the wall with plaster and then paints over it while it is still wet. The lime in the plaster binds the painting to the surface of the wall as the plaster dries. Plaster that dries before it can be painted is removed. Murals are a distinct medium of painting in that they are usually integrated into the design and function of a room or building. Probably the most famous fresco in the world is Michelangelo's mural on the ceiling and end-wall of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. Much of Tibaldi's art was influenced by Michelangelo, notably his various frescoes on themes from the *Odyssey*.



*Companions of Ulysses Slaying the Cattle of the Sun.* Sixteenth-century mural by Tibaldi.

Academy of Science, Bologna, Italy

10

Tripe, the light-colored, rubbery lining of a cow's stomach, is considered a delicacy by some.

11

**Suspense.** "Odors of burnt fat" and Odysseus' grief clue reader that something tragic occurred as Odysseus slept.

with strips of meat, were laid upon the fire.  
Then, as they had no wine, they made libation<sup>o</sup>  
with clear spring water, broiling the entrails first;  
10 and when the bones were burnt and tripes shared,  
they spitted the carved meat.

Just then my slumber

730

left me in a rush, my eyes opened,  
11 and I went down the seaward path. No sooner  
had I caught sight of our black hull, than savory  
odors of burnt fat eddied around me;  
grief took hold of me, and I cried aloud:

735

727. **libation:** ritual pouring of wine or other liquid.

'O Father Zeus and gods in bliss forever,  
you made me sleep away this day of mischief!  
O cruel drowsing, in the evil hour!  
Here they sat, and a great work they contrived.'

Lampetia° in her long gown meanwhile  
12 had borne swift word to the Overlord of Noon:

13 'They have killed your kine.'  
And the Lord Helios  
burst in angry speech amid the immortals:

'O Father Zeus and gods in bliss forever,  
punish Odysseus' men! So overweening,  
now they have killed my peaceful kine, my joy  
14 at morning when I climbed the sky of stars,  
and evening, when I bore westward from heaven.  
Restitution or penalty they shall pay—  
15 and pay in full—or I go down forever  
to light the dead men in the underworld.'

16 Then Zeus who drives the stormcloud made reply:

'Peace, Helios: shine on among the gods,  
shine over mortals in the fields of grain.  
17 Let me throw down one white-hot bolt, and make  
splinters of their ship in the winedark sea.'

18—Calypso later told me of this exchange,  
as she declared that Hermes° had told her.  
Well, when I reached the sea cave and the ship,  
I faced each man, and had it out; but where  
could any remedy be found? There was none.  
The silken beeves of Helios were dead.  
The gods, moreover, made queer signs appear:  
cowhides began to crawl, and beef, both raw  
and roasted, lowed like kine upon the spits.

Now six full days my gallant crew could feast  
upon the prime beef they had marked for slaughter  
from Helios' herd; and Zeus, the son of Cronus,  
added one fine morning.  
All the gales

740 740. **Lampetia** (lāmp-pē'shə):  
a nymph.

745

750

755

760

765

758. **Hermes** (hūr'mēz'): the  
messenger of the gods.

12  
**Epithet.** "Overlord of Noon" re-  
fers to Helios.

13  
Helios appeals to other gods to  
exact vengeance on Odysseus.

14  
Helios drove his chariot westward  
to place of setting sun and then  
rode back to east in a golden  
cup.

15  
Helios' threat is dire, for if he left  
upperworld, all would freeze and  
starve.

16  
Zeus tries to appease Helios by  
promising to destroy Odysseus'  
ship.

17  
**What kind of "bolt" does Zeus  
plan to throw?** A thunderbolt,  
one of Zeus's symbols as sky  
god.

18  
Calypso may have been daughter  
of Atlas or of Oceanus and The-  
tis.

19

Storm is attributed to sky god Zeus.

20

**Imagery.** Zeus uses weapons of thunder and lightning to destroy ship; imagery of sound and smell created with "crack on crack of thunder" and "reeking fumes of sulfur."

21

**Simile.** Comparison of men to small sea birds emphasizes men's helplessness against natural forces and gods.

22

**What is Zeus's punishment for the men?** He destroys their ship, as he had promised Helios.

23

The ship is torn apart by a breaker, but fate provides mast to which Odysseus clings for survival.

24

Nature, or fate, again aids Odysseus by tossing him high enough to grab fig tree.

had ceased, blown out, and with an offshore breeze  
we launched again, stepping the mast and sail,  
to make for the open sea. Astern of us  
the island coastline faded, and no land  
showed anywhere, but only sea and heaven,

19 when Zeus Cronion piled a thunderhead  
above the ship, while gloom spread on the ocean.  
We held our course, but briefly. Then the squall  
struck whining from the west, with gale force, breaking  
both forestays, and the mast came toppling aft  
along the ship's length, so the running rigging  
showered into the bilge. 770

On the afterdeck  
the mast had hit the steersman a slant blow  
bashing the skull in, knocking him overside,  
as the brave soul fled the body, like a diver.

20 With crack on crack of thunder, Zeus let fly  
a bolt against the ship, a direct hit,  
so that she bucked, in reeking fumes of sulfur,  
and all the men were flung into the sea. 775

21 They came up round the wreck, bobbing awhile  
like petrels<sup>o</sup> on the waves.

790. **petrels** (pēt'rēlz): small sea birds.

22 No more seafaring  
homeward for these, no sweet day of return;  
the god had turned his face from them. 790

23 I clambered  
fore and aft my hulk until a comber  
split her, keel from ribs, and the big timber  
floated free; the mast, too, broke away.  
A backstay floated dangling from it, stout  
rawhide rope, and I used this for lashing  
mast and keel together. These I straddled,  
riding the frightful storm. 795

Nor had I yet  
seen the worst of it: for now the west wind  
dropped, and a southeast gale came on—one more  
twist of the knife—taking me north again,  
straight for Charybdis. All that night I drifted,  
and in the sunrise, sure enough, I lay  
off Scylla mountain and Charybdis deep. 800

24 There, as the whirlpool drank the tide, a billow  
tossed me, and I sprang for the great fig tree,  
catching on like a bat under a bough. 805



Nowhere had I to stand, no way of climbing,  
the root and bole° being far below, and far  
above my head the branches and their leaves,  
massed, overshadowing Charybdis pool.

But I clung grimly, thinking my mast and keel  
would come back to the surface when she spouted.

- 25 And ah! how long, with what desire, I waited!  
till, at the twilight hour, when one who hears  
and judges pleas in the marketplace all day  
between contentious men, goes home to supper,  
the long poles at last reared from the sea.

Now I let go with hands and feet, plunging  
straight into the foam beside the timbers,  
pulled astride, and rowed hard with my hands

- 26 to pass by Scylla. Never could I have passed her  
had not the Father of gods and men,° this time,  
kept me from her eyes. Once through the strait,

- 27 nine days I drifted in the open sea  
before I made shore, buoyed up by the gods  
upon Ogygia° Isle. The dangerous nymph  
Calypso lives and sings there, in her beauty,  
and she received me, loved me.

- 28 But why tell  
the same tale that I told last night in hall  
to you and to your lady? Those adventures  
made a long evening, and I do not hold  
with tiresome repetition of a story."

810 810. **bole:** tree trunk.

815

820

824. **Father of gods and men:**  
825 Zeus.

828. **Ogygia** (ō-jīj'ē-ə).

830

## 25

**Description.** Odysseus describes his wait for the mast and keel in terms that underscore the tedium of his position.

## 26

**To whom does Odysseus credit his escape from Scylla?** Zeus, who kept Scylla from seeing him.

## 27

Number *nine* suggests gestation period before birth. Odysseus' experiences on his journey have been preparing him for a new knowledge of himself and his world; suggests Odysseus' spiritual rebirth.

## 28

Odysseus' words remind readers that he is recounting his adventures in King Alcinous' court in Phaeacia.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to describe how Odysseus has changed during his travels. Emphasize that as an epic hero he must successfully pass one or more tests to complete his quest and achieve his identity. Review the tests he has already passed.

## READING CHECK

1. He plugs their ears with beeswax (pp. 618–619).
2. Scylla is a monster with six heads; Charybdis is a whirlpool (p. 621).
3. Provisions are gone, and they are hungry (pp. 624–625).
4. Thighbones, fat, meat from cattle, and a libation (pp. 625–626).
5. Ogygia (p. 629).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. They sing beautifully, praising Achaeans and promising joy and knowledge.
2. Perhaps he showed cleverness, strength in staying quiet and saving most of men; others may say he showed dishonesty, weakness.
- 3a. Defeats Cicones but cannot control men's greed; responsible in sending only few men to Lotus-Eaters and in rescuing them; irresponsible in ignoring men's advice in land of Cyclopes but successful in tricking Polyphemus and escaping; controls men in Sirens episode and leads all but six men safely through Scylla and Charybdis; responsibly orders men to avoid sun god's cattle.
- 3b. Responses will vary. Generally strong, responsible, but not infallible.
- 4a. Helios threatens to go to underworld unless men are punished. 4b. Zeus destroys ship and men drown.
5. Zeus hides Odysseus from Scylla and provides mast.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. Suggests enormous size.
2. Suggests enchantment, witchcraft.
3. Refers to persuasive promises of British. Suggests temptress.
4. Dilemma.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Encourage geographical awareness of Greece and the Mediterranean by displaying two maps of the area, one of the ancient world and one of the area today. Make available the *National Geographic* (August 1986) article on Homer's geog-

raphy by Tim Severin, and consider showing the film *Search for Ulysses* (53 minutes) from Columbia Broadcasting System, 1966.

## Reading Check

1. How does Odysseus see to it that his men cannot hear the voices of the Sirens?
2. Identify Scylla and Charybdis.
3. Why do the men disobey Odysseus' orders on the island of the sun god?
4. What offerings are made to the gods?
5. Where does Odysseus come ashore after drifting in the sea for nine days?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Epic

1. Odysseus maneuvers his men safely past the Sirens while he alone listens to their song. How do the Sirens tempt him?
2. Faced with a choice between Scylla and Charybdis, Odysseus does as Circe advises and chooses Scylla. He knows that six of his men will die, yet he withholds this information from his crew. Is this a strength or weakness in his character? Explain.
3. Consider each of the episodes you have read so far. a. How well does Odysseus control his men in each episode? b. How effective and responsible is he as a leader? Cite specific lines to support your answer.
4. Before Odysseus' men feast on the cattle of the sun god, they perform a ritual of sacrifice to the gods. a. Why does the ritual fail to please the gods? b. How are the men punished?
5. Odysseus alone survives. How is he aided by Zeus?

## Language and Vocabulary

### Learning Words from the Epic

A number of words from the *Odyssey* have become part of our language. The word *odyssey*, for example, is used for any extended journey.

The Cyclopes are the origin for the word *Cyclopean*. What can you infer about the meaning of this word?

Circe is the enchantress who changes Odysseus' men into beasts. What do you think the word *Circean* means?

The word *siren* is sometimes applied to a woman who uses her charms to lure men to their destruction. In his famous speech in the Virginia Convention, Patrick Henry warns Americans not to listen to the "song of that siren." Locate a copy of the speech and find out what he means.

Odysseus has to steer a course between two dangers, Scylla and Charybdis. What do you think the expression "to pass between Scylla and Charybdis" has come to mean?

Check your answers in a dictionary.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to explain Odysseus' role in Ithaca—his identity as man or god, his relationship with his son Telemachus, and his plans. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. Ask students to make vocabulary cards or to list unfamiliar words in Part 2 of the *Odyssey*. Encourage them to use context clues to define words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students if they have ever felt homesick. Have them write a paragraph describing how they felt before and after returning home. Tell them that this section describes the reunion of Odysseus and his son.

## PART 2 ODYSSEUS IN ITHACA

### Father and Son

*After hearing the story of Odysseus' wanderings, the king of Phaeacia offers him a boat and crew to take him home to Ithaca. Thus Odysseus returns to his own land after an absence of twenty years.*

*The goddess Athena appears to Odysseus and tells him to proceed cautiously. Believing that he is dead, many suitors have besieged his palace, eager to marry his beautiful wife, Penelope. Penelope does not believe that Odysseus is dead, but she is unable to make the suitors leave. They remain in Ithaca, eating and drinking at her expense. They are even plotting to murder her son, Telemachus (tə-lēm'ə-kəs), before he is old enough to inherit his father's lands. Telemachus, who hopes for his father's return, has gone to Sparta to ask for news of him.*

*Athena disguises Odysseus as a ragged old beggar and sends him to the hut of Eumaeus (yoo-mē'əs), an old and loyal swineherd. She then directs Telemachus to return to Ithaca and tells Odysseus that it is time to reveal his identity to his son.*

Head of Greek warrior (detail). Bronze, c. fifth century B.C.  
Museum of Archaeology, Calabria, Italy



## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote summarizes the opening events of Part 2 of the *Odyssey*. The king of Phaeacia offers his help for Odysseus' return to Ithaca. Athena cautions Odysseus about his return by informing him of the troubles in his homeland. She then arranges his meeting with his son Telemachus. How will Telemachus react to his father's return? Will Odysseus be able to resolve the problems at home?

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

**Exploring the Subject**  
Few large Greek statues of bronze survive, having been melted down for the metal they contained. Many smaller bronze statuettes and busts do exist, often because they were safely buried in graves. Some works were hollow, the design hammered in, but many were solid casts. This bronze head of a Greek warrior illustrates the detail possible in bronze statuary.



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

After twenty years, Odysseus returns to Ithaca to find that suitors have besieged his house, trying to convince his wife Penelope to remarry. He even hears that they are plotting to murder his son.

### Father and Son

After students have read "Father and Son," the margin annotations will assist you in guiding students' analysis of Odysseus' relationship with his son.

1

**Characterization.** Description of goddess Athena immediately establishes her as imposing power. She has power to change her own appearance and to transform others. Here she chooses majestic guise that suggests she is, indeed, "clever at her craft."

2

By showing herself to Odysseus, Athena singles him out as a hero among humankind.

3

Athena advises Odysseus to reveal himself to his son.

4

Athena's desire for battle is appropriate since she is goddess of war.

5

**Into what does Athena transform Odysseus?** Into a young man.

6

Telemachus is awed and frightened by Odysseus' transformation. He thinks Odysseus is a god.

7

**Characterization.** Having matured through his travels, Odysseus accepts responsibility for pain his absence has caused his son.

## PRESENTATION

Explain to students that the speaker in this part of the *Odyssey* is no longer Odysseus but the poet Homer. If time allows, assign dialogue for oral reading.

Emphasize the important relationships developed in this section between Odysseus and the goddess Athena and between Odysseus and his son Telemachus. Ask students to speculate on Odysseus' motivations for keeping his identity a

... From the air

835

1 she walked, taking the form of a tall woman, handsome and clever at her craft, and stood beyond the gate in plain sight of Odysseus, unseen, though, by Telemachus, unguessed, for not to everyone will gods appear.

840

2 Odysseus noticed her; so did the dogs, who cowered whimpering away from her. She only nodded, signing to him with her brows, a sign he recognized. Crossing the yard, he passed out through the gate in the stockade to face the goddess. There she said to him:

845

"Son of Laertes and the gods of old,

3 Odysseus, master of landways and seaways, dissemble to your son no longer now. The time has come: tell him how you together will bring doom on the suitors in the town. I shall not be far distant then, for I myself desire battle."

850

Saying no more,

5 she tipped her golden wand upon the man, making his cloak pure white, and the knit tunic fresh around him. Lithe and young she made him, ruddy with sun, his jawline clean, the beard no longer gray upon his chin. And she withdrew when she had done.

855

Then Lord Odysseus

reappeared—and his son was thunderstruck. Fear in his eyes, he looked down and away as though it were a god, and whispered:

860

"Stranger,

you are no longer what you were just now!

6 Your cloak is new; even your skin! You are one of the gods who rule the sweep of heaven! Be kind to us, we'll make you fair oblation<sup>o</sup> and gifts of hammered gold. Have mercy on us!"

865

866. **oblation:** an offering to a god.

The noble and enduring man replied:

"No god. Why take me for a god? No, no.

7 I am that father whom your boyhood lacked and suffered pain for lack of. I am he."

870

\*For additional teaching materials related to this selection, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guides 81, 82, 83, and 84 / Selection Test 46 / Reading Checks 44 and 45 / Vocabulary Tests 29 and 30 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 58

secret and to discuss how Telemachus' reactions to his father's plans reflect his maturity.

- 8 Held back too long, the tears ran down his cheeks  
as he embraced his son.

Only Telemachus,  
uncomprehending, wild  
with incredulity, cried out:

"You cannot  
be my father Odysseus! Meddling spirits  
conceived this trick to twist the knife in me!  
No man of woman born could work these wonders  
by his own craft, unless a god came into it  
with ease to turn him young or old at will.  
I swear you were in rags and old,  
and here you stand like one of the immortals!"

875

- 9 Odysseus brought his ranging mind to bear  
and said:

"This is not princely, to be swept  
away by wonder at your father's presence.  
No other Odysseus will ever come,

885

- 10 for he and I are one, the same; his bitter

- 11 fortune and his wanderings are mine.

- 12 Twenty years gone, and I am back again  
on my own island.

- 13 As for my change of skin,  
that is a charm Athena, Hope of Soldiers,  
uses as she will; she has the knack  
to make me seem a beggar man sometimes  
and sometimes young, with finer clothes about me.  
It is no hard thing for the gods of heaven  
to glorify a man or bring him low."

890

895

When he had spoken, down he sat.

Then, throwing  
his arms around this marvel of a father

- 14 Telemachus began to weep. Salt tears  
rose from the wells of longing in both men,  
and cries burst from both as keen and fluttering  
as those of the great taloned hawk,  
whose nestlings farmers take before they fly.  
So helplessly they cried, pouring out tears,  
and might have gone on weeping so till sundown,  
had not Telemachus said:

900

905

"Dear father! Tell me

8

**Characterization.** Tears show Odysseus' increasing ability to feel and express human emotion; he also cried in King Alcinous' court when blind Demodocus sang of Troy.

9

**On what might his "ranging mind" be dwelling?** He might be thinking of past adventures, change in his son, his imminent meeting with Penelope, or challenge of suitors.

10

Odysseus attempts to prove his identity to his son.

11

Odysseus' wanderings have been long and painful but have helped him to understand human pain and longing.

12

Odysseus has spent ten years at Troy and ten years on trip back home—seven of which were on Calypso's island and one on Circe's island.

13

Odysseus explains to his son that Athena has caused his sudden transformation.

14

**Homeric simile.** Compares emotions of two strong men to those of powerful hawk when it loses its young.

**15**  
Fulfilling Cyclops' curse, he returns under "strange sail."

**16**  
Phaeacians lived a safe, isolated life, but in returning Odysseus to Ithaca, they cause themselves pain, for Poseidon turns their ship to stone and raises mountains around city.

**17**  
Guest-gifts of bronze and gold are indication that Phaeacians are civilized people.

**18**  
According to some versions of the legend, an olive tree, Athena's symbol, overlooked cave where Phaeacians left Odysseus.

**19**  
**Characterization.** Odysseus wisely gathers information in order to devise strategy for battle.

**20**  
One of his first "tricks" was to try to avoid Trojan War by feigning madness, only to be discovered when he avoided hitting baby son with plow.

**21**  
**Characterization.** Telemachus reveals his practical nature by pointing out unfavorable odds to his father.

**15** what kind of vessel put you here ashore  
on Ithaca? Your sailors, who were they?  
I doubt you made it, walking on the sea!"

Then said Odysseus, who had borne the barren sea: 910

"Only plain truth shall I tell you, child.

**16** Great seafarers, the Phaeacians, gave me passage  
as they give other wanderers. By night  
over the open ocean, while I slept,  
they brought me in their cutter, set me down 915

**17** on Ithaca, with gifts of bronze and gold  
and stores of woven things. By the gods' will

**18** these lie all hidden in a cave. I came  
to this wild place, directed by Athena,  
so that we might lay plans to kill our enemies. 920

**19** Count up the suitors for me, let me know  
what men at arms are there, how many men.  
I must put all my mind to it, to see  
if we two by ourselves can take them on  
or if we should look round for help."

Telemachus 925

replied:

"O, Father, all my life your fame  
as a fighting man has echoed in my ears—

**20** your skill with weapons and the tricks of war—  
but what you speak of is a staggering thing,

**21** beyond imagining, for me. How can two men  
do battle with a houseful in their prime? 930

For I must tell you this is no affair  
of ten or even twice ten men, but scores,  
throngs of them. You shall see, here and now.  
The number from Dulichium alone 935

is fifty-two, picked men, with armorers,  
a half-dozen; twenty-four came from Same,<sup>o</sup> 937. Same (sā'mē).

twenty from Zacynthus; our own island  
accounts for twelve, high-ranked, and their retainers,

Medon<sup>o</sup> the crier, and the Master Harper, 940 940. Medon (mē'dōn).

besides a pair of handymen at feasts.  
If we go in against all these  
I fear we pay in salt blood for your vengeance.  
You must think hard if you would conjure up  
the fighting strength to take us through."



	Odysseus	945
	who had endured the long war and the sea answered:	
	“I’ll tell you now.	
22	Suppose Athena’s arm is over us, and Zeus her father’s, must I rack my brains for more?”	
23	Clearheaded Telemachus looked hard and said:	950
	“Those two are great defenders, no one doubts it, but throned in the serene clouds overhead; other affairs of men and gods they have to rule over.”	
	And the hero answered:	
	“Before long they will stand to right and left of us	955
24	in combat, in the shouting, when the test comes—our nerve against the suitors’ in my hall. Here is your part: At break of day tomorrow home with you, go mingle with our princes. The swineherd later on will take me down the port-side trail—a beggar, by my looks,	960
25	hangdog and old. If they make fun of me in my own courtyard, let your ribs cage up your springing heart, no matter what I suffer, no matter if they pull me by the heels or practice shots at me, to drive me out.	965
	Look on, hold down your anger. You may even	
26	plead with them, by heaven! in gentle terms to quit their horseplay—not that they will heed you, rash as they are, facing their day of wrath. Now fix the next step in your mind.	970
	Athena,	
27	counseling me, will give me word, and I shall signal to you, nodding: at that point round up all armor, lances, gear of war left in our hall, and stow the lot away back in the vaulted storeroom. When the suitors	975
28	miss those arms and question you, be soft in what you say—answer:	
	“I thought I’d move them out of the smoke. They seemed no longer those bright arms Odysseus left us years ago when he went off to Troy. Here where the fire’s	980

## 22

Important motif in hero quest is divine aid; Odysseus is assisted by Athena and Zeus.

## 23

**Characterization.** “Clear-headed” suggests Telemachus’ developing wisdom.

## 24

Three stages of hero quest are separation, test, and return. In his travels, Odysseus has undergone many tests, but climactic one will be battle with suitors.

## 25

**Characterization.** Earlier, Odysseus had taunted Cyclops without restraint or wisdom; here he shows his maturity by teaching these lessons to his son.

## 26

Odysseus is instructing Telemachus in cunning and dissembling.

## 27

As goddess of wisdom, Athena is best counselor.

## 28

**How does Odysseus prepare Telemachus for this part of the plan?** By giving him a story to tell in case he is questioned about weapons; again instructs him in cunning and dissembling.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to discuss why Telemachus thinks Odysseus is a god and how Odysseus convinces him that he is his father. Have them explain Odysseus' plan and the part that Telemachus will play in it.

29

**Analogy.** "Tempered iron" has been tested and proved by fire; Odysseus, too, has been "tempered" by his life-threatening experiences.

30

Athena took name *Pallas* to honor a friend she had accidentally killed. The statue named for Pallas played crucial part in Trojan War, since Troy could not fall as long as it held the Palladium. Odysseus stole statue, briefly angering Athena.

31

Odysseus and Telemachus work secretly to discover whom they can trust.

## READING CHECK

1. She clothes him in white cloak and tunic and makes him young and strong (p. 632).
2. He thinks Odysseus is a god (p. 632).
3. Athena and Zeus (p. 635).
4. An old beggar (p. 635).
5. Two broadswords, two spears, and two shields (p. 636).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. He believes Odysseus' transformation could only have occurred to a god. 1b. Odysseus explains that Athena caused transformation.
2. Odysseus says Athena and Zeus will stand beside them.
3. Telemachus is to go home, restrain his anger, and hide all arms but those to be used by him and Odysseus.
4. To determine which men and women are loyal friends.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Encourage students to consult history books and encyclopedias and report on social customs, clothing, and weapons of Odysseus' day.

Use a map of Odysseus' journey to create a board game about the epic—the object being to

reach Ithaca before being destroyed by the Cyclops or other antagonists.

Show additional films on the *Odyssey*, such as the excellent three-part series from the Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corporation.

hot breath came, they had grown black and drear.

One better reason, too, I had from Zeus:

Suppose a brawl starts up when you are drunk,  
you might be crazed and bloody one another,

985

29 and that would stain your feast, your courtship. Tempered  
iron can magnetize a man.'

Say that.

But put aside two broadswords and two spears  
for our own use, two oxhide shields nearby

30 when we go into action. Pallas Athena

990

and Zeus All-Provident will see you through,  
bemusing our young friends.

Now one thing more.

If son of mine you are and blood of mine,  
let no one hear Odysseus is about.

Neither Laertes, nor the swineherd here,  
nor any slave, nor even Penelope.

995

31 But you and I alone must learn how far  
the women are corrupted; we should know  
how to locate good men among our hands,  
the loyal and respectful, and the shirkers  
who take you lightly, as alone and young."

1000

## Reading Check

1. How does Athena transform Odysseus?
2. What trick does Telemachus suspect?
3. Which two Olympians does Odysseus depend on to help him fight the suitors?
4. What disguise will Odysseus assume when he comes to the palace?
5. What weapons does Odysseus ask his son to put aside?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Epic

- 1a. What makes Telemachus think that Odysseus must be a god? b. How does Odysseus convince Telemachus that he is his father?
2. Telemachus warns Odysseus that there are far too many suitors for the two of them to fight. How does Odysseus persuade Telemachus that they can win?
3. Odysseus outlines his plan in lines 958–990. What is Telemachus' part in the plan?
4. Why does Odysseus want to keep his return a secret?

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to draw inferences about the character and motivations of Odysseus and Penelope. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. Introduce new words and then ask students to supply a synonym for each word by using context clues.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students if they have ever been separated from their pets for an extended time. How did the pets react upon their return? Tell them that this selection will show how Odysseus' dog Argos responds to him after twenty years.

### Argos

*The next day Odysseus appears at the manor disguised as a beggar. He is accompanied by the swineherd Eumaeus, to whom he has been confiding his plans.*

While he spoke

an old hound, lying near, pricked up his ears

1 and lifted up his muzzle. This was Argos,

trained as a puppy by Odysseus,

1005

but never taken on a hunt before

his master sailed for Troy. The young men, afterward,

hunted wild goats with him, and hare, and deer,

but he had grown old in his master's absence.

2 Treated as rubbish now, he lay at last

1010

upon a mass of dung before the gates—

manure of mules and cows, piled there until

fieldhands could spread it on the king's estate.

Abandoned there, and half destroyed with flies,

old Argos lay.

3 But when he knew he heard

1015

Odysseus' voice nearby, he did his best

to wag his tail, nose down, with flattened ears,

having no strength to move nearer his master.

And the man looked away,

4 wiping a salt tear from his cheek, but he

1020

hid this from Eumaeus. Then he said:

5 "I marvel that they leave this hound to lie

here on the dung pile;

he would have been a fine dog, from the look of him,

though I can't say as to his power and speed

1025

when he was young. You find the same good build

in house dogs, table dogs landowners keep

all for style."

And you replied, Eumaeus:

"A hunter owned him—but the man is dead

in some far place. If this old hound could show

1030

the form he had when Lord Odysseus left him,

6 going to Troy, you'd see him swift and strong.

He never shrank from any savage thing

he'd brought to bay in the deep woods; on the scent

### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote discusses Odysseus' arrival at the manor. Ask students who will be first to recognize him.

### Argos

After students have read "Argos," the margin annotations will assist you in providing further insight into Odysseus' character.

1

City in Arcadia was also named Argos; name also recalls Argo, ship of another great Greek hero, Jason.

2

**Connotation.** Argos is "treated as rubbish," suggesting that he has been discarded because he is no longer useful.

3

Of Odysseus' entire household, only Argos immediately recognizes him.

4

**Characterization.** Odysseus shows compassion for Argos, which no one else has shown him in his master's absence.

5

Odysseus cannot understand why Argos has been abandoned.

6

**Which qualities did Argos share with Odysseus?** Swiftness, strength, and courage.



## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Odysseus arrives home disguised as a beggar. He is recognized only by his dog Argos, taunted by Antinous, and questioned by Penelope. Why does Odysseus continue to keep his identity a secret?

**7** Eumaeus speaks from experience. The son of a wealthy king, he was abducted by pirates and sold as a slave to Odysseus' father Laertes.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote prepares readers for Antinous' outrage when he sees the beggar Odysseus in the palace. Ask students to predict Odysseus' responses to Antinous' outburst.

## The Suitors

After students have read "The Suitors," the margin annotations will assist you in asking students to draw inferences about the motivations of Odysseus and the suitors.

**1** Antinous, leader of suitors, is more brutal, cruel, and arrogant than others.

**2** This "pest" is Odysseus. In returning to his home as beggar, Odysseus shows character transformation from excessive pride to admirable humility.

**3** With such men in his house, Odysseus has returned to "bitter days" at home as destined by Cyclops' curse.

**4** **Irony.** Food actually belongs to "beggar" Odysseus, not to Antinous.

## PRESENTATION

Ask students to imagine how they would feel upon returning home to find a group of strangers vandalizing their homes and threatening their families. Prepare students for an oral reading of the selections by discussing briefly the sympa-

thetic Eumaeus, the rude and hateful Antinous, the loyal housekeeper Eurynome, and the regal and faithful Penelope.

After students have read the selections, have them analyze Odysseus' feelings for his dog, the suitors, and his wife. Ask students if they believe

no other dog kept up with him. Now misery  
has him in leash. His owner died abroad,  
and here the women slaves will take no care of him.  
You know how servants are: without a master  
they have no will to labor, or excel.  
For Zeus who views the wide world takes away  
half the manhood of a man, that day  
**7** he goes into captivity and slavery."

Eumaeus crossed the court and went straight forward  
into the mégaron<sup>o</sup> among the suitors;  
but death and darkness in that instant closed  
the eyes of Argos, who had seen his master,  
Odysseus, after twenty years.

1035

1040

1045

**1044. mégaron** (még'ă-rŏn):  
the central hall of the house.

## The Suitors

*Odysseus enters the hall of his home and passes among the suitors to beg. Antinous (ăn-tĩn'ŏ-s), the most arrogant and outspoken of the suitors, breaks into a rage.*

**1** But here Antinous broke in, shouting:  
"God!

**2** What evil wind blew in this pest?  
Get over,  
stand in the passage! Nudge my table, will you?  
Egyptian whips are sweet  
to what you'll come to here, you nosing rat,  
making your pitch to everyone!

1050

**3** These men have bread to throw away on you  
**4** because it is not theirs. Who cares? Who spares  
another's food, when he has more than plenty?"

1055

With guile Odysseus drew away, then said:

"A pity that you have more looks than heart.  
You'd grudge a pinch of salt from your own larder  
to your own handyman. You sit here, fat  
on others' meat, and cannot bring yourself  
to rummage out a crust of bread for me!"

1060

Then anger made Antinous' heart beat hard,

Penelope suspects Odysseus' identity. Share with students the arguments that Robert Fitzgerald uses to support this viewpoint (see *A Commentary on Odysseus and Penelope* in the *Teacher's Manual* on p. 288).

and, glowering under his brows, he answered:

"Now!

You think you'll shuffle off and get away  
after that impudence? Oh, no you don't!"

1065

The stool he let fly hit the man's right shoulder  
on the packed muscle under the shoulder blade—  
like solid rock, for all the effect one saw.

5 Odysseus only shook his head, containing  
thoughts of bloody work, as he walked on,  
then sat, and dropped his loaded bag again  
upon the doorsill. Facing the whole crowd  
he said, and eyed them all:

1070

"One word only,  
my lords, and suitors of the famous queen.  
One thing I have to say.

1075

6 There is no pain, no burden for the heart  
when blows come to a man, and he defending  
his own cattle—his own cows and lambs.  
Here it was otherwise. Antinous  
hit me for being driven on by hunger—  
how many bitter seas men cross for hunger!

1080

If beggars interest the gods, if there are Furies°  
pent in the dark to avenge a poor man's wrong, then may  
Antinous meet his death before his wedding day!"

1085

Then said Eupheithes° son, Antinous:

"Enough.

Eat and be quiet where you are, or shamble elsewhere,  
unless you want these lads to stop your mouth  
pulling you by the heels, or hands and feet,  
over the whole floor, till your back is peeled!"

1090

But now the rest were mortified, and someone  
spoke from the crowd of young bucks to rebuke him:

7 "A poor show, that—hitting this famished tramp—  
bad business, if he happened to be a god.  
You know they go in foreign guise, the gods do,  
looking like strangers, turning up  
in towns and settlements to keep an eye  
on manners, good or bad."

1095

But at this notion

5

**Characterization.** Odysseus has learned patience; he is now able to control his anger.

6

**Foreshadowing.** Implies that Antinous has no right to defend property that is not his. Unknown to suitors, Odysseus is justifying plans to kill them and regain property.

1083. **Furies:** three goddesses who punished those crimes that went unavenged.

1086. **Eupheithes** (yōō-pī'thēz).

7

**Why are the other suitors critical of the way Antinous treats the beggar? Why don't they treat him better?** They are more aware of gods and laws of hospitality than Antinous. In absence of more worthy leader, however, they have thoughtlessly followed Antinous.

8

**Characterization.** Telemachus is growing up, restraining his anger, and, like father, using cunning.

9

**What characteristics does Penelope reveal as she curses Antinous?** Like Odysseus, she has strong and vengeful heart.

10

**Characterization.** Penelope respects laws of hospitality and pities beggar.

11

Later in the evening, Eumaeus praises beggar's storytelling, and Penelope calls for Odysseus to return and destroy suitors. Hearing her, Telemachus sneezes, showing his nervousness, and Penelope laughs, showing her tension and possible suspicion of beggar's identity.

Antinous only shrugged.

8

Telemachus,  
after the blow his father bore, sat still  
without a tear, though his heart felt the blow.  
Slowly he shook his head from side to side,  
containing murderous thoughts.

1100

Penelope  
on the higher level of her room had heard  
the blow, and knew who gave it. Now she murmured:

1105

9 "Would god you could be hit yourself, Antinous—  
hit by Apollo's bowshot!"

And Eurynome,<sup>o</sup>  
her housekeeper, put in:

1107. **Eurynome** (yōō-rīn'ə-mē).

"He and no other?  
If all we pray for came to pass, not one  
would live till dawn!"

Her gentle mistress said:

1110

"Oh, Nan, they are a bad lot; they intend  
ruin for all of us; but Antinous  
appears a blacker-hearted hound than any.

10 Here is a poor man come, a wanderer,  
driven by want to beg his bread, and everyone  
in hall gave bits, to cram his bag—only  
Antinous threw a stool, and banged his shoulder!"

1115

So she described it, sitting in her chamber  
among her maids—while her true lord was eating.  
Then she called in the forester and said:

1120

11 "Go to that man on my behalf, Eumaeus,  
and send him here, so I can greet and question him.  
Abroad in the great world, he may have heard  
rumors about Odysseus—may have known him!"



## Penelope

*Later that night Penelope meets secretly with the old beggar. She asks him if he has heard any news of her husband.*

- 1 "Friend, let me ask you first of all: 1125  
who are you, where do you come from, of what nation  
and parents were you born?"

And he replied:

- 2 "My lady, never a man in the wide world  
3 should have a fault to find with you. Your name 1130  
has gone out under heaven like the sweet  
honor of some god-fearing king, who rules  
in equity over the strong: his black lands bear  
both wheat and barley, fruit trees laden bright,  
new lambs at lambing time—and the deep sea  
gives great hauls of fish by his good strategy, 1135  
so that his folk fare well.

O my dear lady,  
this being so, let it suffice to ask me  
of other matters—not my blood, my homeland.  
Do not enforce me to recall my pain.  
My heart is sore; but I must not be found 1140  
sitting in tears here, in another's house:  
it is not well forever to be grieving.  
One of the maids might say—or you might think—  
I had got maudlin over cups of wine."

And Penelope replied:

- 4 "Stranger, my looks, 1145  
my face, my carriage, were soon lost or faded  
when the<sup>1</sup>Achaean crossed the sea to Troy,  
Odysseus my lord among the rest.  
If he returned, if he were here to care for me,  
I might be happily renowned! 1150  
But grief instead heaven sent me—years of pain.  
Sons of the noblest families on the islands,  
Dulichium, Same, wooded Zacynthus,  
with native Ithacans, are here to court me,  
against my wish; and they consume this house. 1155
- 5 Can I give proper heed to guest or suppliant  
or herald on the realm's affairs?

### PREREADING FOCUS

As the headnote explains, Penelope meets with the beggar to inquire about Odysseus. What will Odysseus tell her? Will he keep his identity a secret?

### Penelope

After students have read "Penelope," the margin annotations will assist you in guiding discussion and analysis of Penelope's character.

1 **Irony.** Reader knows beggar's true identity; Penelope does not.

2 Seeing his wife for first time in twenty years, Odysseus is overcome and can only praise her.

3 **Homeric simile.** Odysseus compares Penelope's name to the "sweet honor" of a king, for she is queenly and wise, making her household prosper.

4 Penelope's concern with her looks may show pride or suspicion that beggar is Odysseus.

5 **What does Penelope suggest with her question to Odysseus?** That she is helpless to defend herself against the suitors. Penelope justifies herself to "stranger."

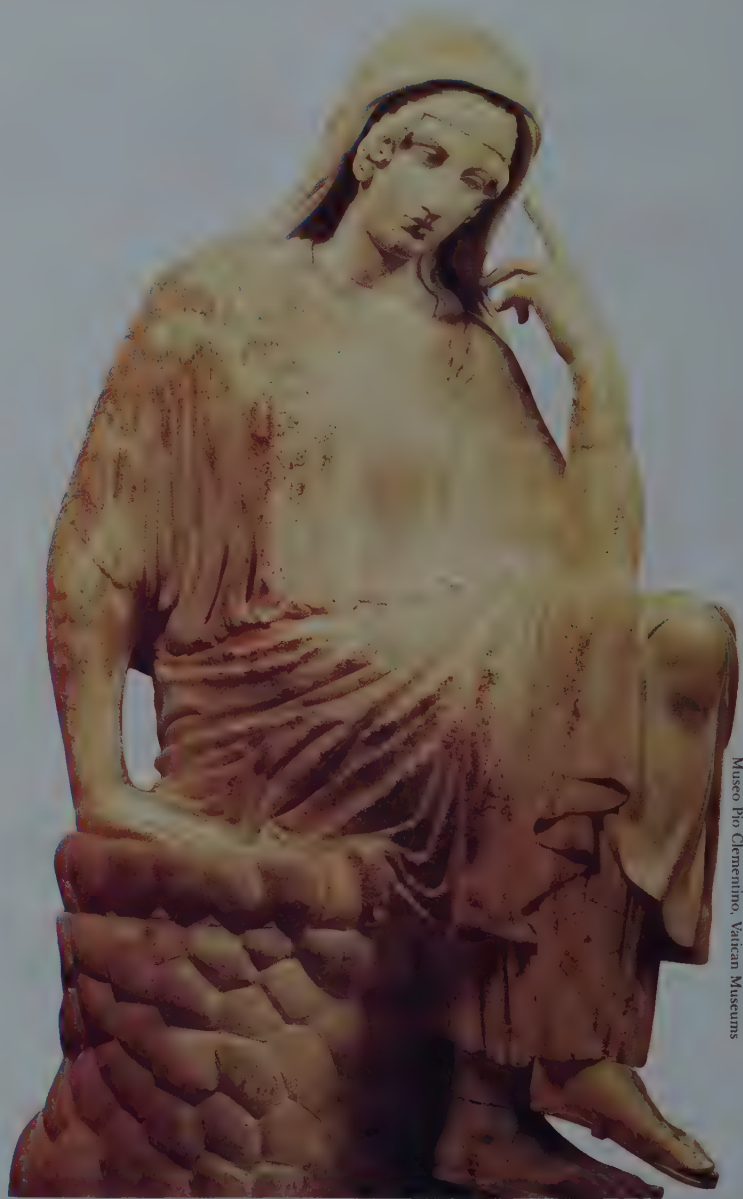
## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

The Augustan Age (27 B.C.–A.D. 14) in Rome was a time of peace and prosperity. Although artists admired the artistic tradition of classical Greece and worked from Greek models, their work reveals a Roman sensibility.

### Ideas for Writing

Although other characters speak of Penelope's beauty, she disparages her appearance. She says her looks and "carriage" were "lost or faded" soon after Odysseus left her. Penelope shows her deep and faithful love for Odysseus when she suggests that, if her husband returned, she might be known as blessedly happy. Have students write a letter from Penelope to Odysseus explaining her situation in the years of his absence.



Museo Pio Clementino, Vatican Museums

*Penelope Seated.* Roman copy of Greek original. Stone, c. first century A.D.  
Museo Pio Clementino, Vatican Museums

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage may be used to give students practice in drawing logical conclusions. Ask students to identify which conclusion can logically be drawn from the passage: **A.** Since Odysseus' departure, Penelope has looked for-

ward to marrying the most wealthy suitor. (Contradicted in passage.) **B.** Penelope and Telemachus are poverty-stricken. (Unsupported. Passage implies only that suitors are rapidly reducing their wealth.) **C.** Penelope has cleverly avoided marrying as long as she can considering pres-

ures from suitors and parents and the destruction of Telemachus' property. (Correct.) **D.** Penelope shows her cleverness with the tricks of the loom and the secret of the bed. (Irrelevant. While true, these details are not mentioned in this passage.)

How could I?

wasted with longing for Odysseus, while here they press for marriage.

- 6** Ruses served my turn  
to draw the time out—first a close-grained web  
I had the happy thought to set up weaving  
on my big loom in hall. I said, that day:  
'Young men—my suitors, now my lord is dead,  
let me finish my weaving before I marry,  
or else my thread will have been spun in vain. 1160
- 7** It is a shroud I weave for Lord Laertes  
when cold Death comes to lay him on his bier.  
'The country wives would hold me in dishonor  
if he, with all his fortune, lay unshrouded.'  
I reached their hearts that way, and they agreed. 1165
- So every day I wove on the great loom,  
but every night by torchlight I unwove it;
- 8** and so for three years I deceived the Achaeans.  
But when the seasons brought a fourth year on,  
as long months waned, and the long days were spent, 1170
- 9** through imprudent folly in the slinking maids  
they caught me—clamored up to me at night;  
I had no choice then but to finish it.  
And now, as matters stand at last,
- 10** I have no strength left to evade a marriage,  
cannot find any further way; my parents  
urge it upon me, and my son  
will not stand by while they eat up his property. ◀ 1180
- 11** He comprehends it, being a man full-grown,  
able to oversee the kind of house  
Zeus would endow with honor. 1185

But you too  
confide in me, tell me your ancestry.  
Your were not born of mythic oak or stone."

*The beggar invents a tale of how he had seen Odysseus twenty years ago in Crete, when Odysseus was bound for Troy. He convinces Penelope that the story is true by describing Odysseus' clothes in detail. Then he tells her he has heard that Odysseus is about to set sail for Ithaca.*

**6**  
**Characterization.** Penelope's clever ruse shows that she is equal match for the cunning Odysseus.

**7**  
Penelope's concern with Laertes' shroud shows loyalty to family and respect for burial customs.

**8**  
Shows Penelope is patient and determined.

**9**  
Contrasts disloyal maids with loyal wife.

**10**  
*Why does Penelope decide that she cannot evade marriage much longer?* Knows that unless Odysseus returns soon, she must marry to restore order in kingdom and save her son's inheritance from suitors.

**11**  
Penelope recognizes that Telemachus is growing up.

**12**  
**Irony.** That readers know the beggar's identity and Penelope does not creates **dramatic irony** and heightens suspense as readers wonder when Odysseus will reveal himself.

- 12** "You see, then, he is alive and well, and headed  
homeward now, no more to be abroad  
far from his island, his dear wife and son. 1190



## CLOSURE

Ask students to explain how Odysseus' character has changed in the narrative. Also ask students to defend or refute the theory that Penelope recognizes Odysseus.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ask students to write a character sketch of Penelope that would support Odysseus' tribute to her: "My lady, never a man in the wide world should have a fault to find with you."

Divide students into groups to dramatize Odysseus' encounters with Argos, Antinous, and Penelope.

13

**Theme.** Odysseus swears by Zeus and by his own hearth in same breath, underscoring importance of home.

## READING CHECK

1. Argos hears and recognizes his master's voice (p. 637).
2. Odysseus says that Antinous eats others' meat but begrudges bread to beggar (p.638).
3. She believes beggar may have known or heard about Odysseus (p. 640).
4. Odysseus will come before crescent moon (p. 644).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. We sympathize with Argos because of his suffering (lying in manure and being tormented by flies) and his lonely death.
- 1b. Most people forget their loyalties and pursue selfish goals. Life goes on in midst of death and sadness, as in Eumaeus' matter-of-fact reaction to Argos' plight and in Odysseus' pursuit of his goal.
2. He shows more humility, wisdom, and self-control.
- 3a. Shows good moral judgment about suitors and sympathy for and hospitality to beggar. 3b. Is discreet in meeting beggar, kind and polite to him, loyal to her husband, and understanding of needs of her son and realm.
- 3c. She wove a shroud for Laertes by day and unraveled it by night.
- 3d. She is clever.
4. He may want to test her loyalty, to avoid putting her under strain of keeping secret of his presence, or to postpone real reunion until he has reclaimed his throne.

13 Here is my sworn word for it. Witness this,  
god of the zenith,<sup>o</sup> noblest of the gods,  
and Lord Odysseus' hearthfire, now before me:  
I swear these things shall turn out as I say.  
Between this present dark and one day's ebb,  
after the wane, before the crescent moon,  
Odysseus will come."

1193. **god of the zenith:** Zeus.

1195

## Reading Check

1. How does Argos recognize Odysseus?
2. Why does Antinous strike Odysseus?
3. Why does Penelope send for the beggar?
4. What does the beggar predict will happen?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing the Epic

1. Odysseus' encounter with his dog Argos is one of the most moving episodes in the *Odyssey*.  
**a.** Which details are particularly effective in arousing your sympathy for the animal?  
**b.** What truths about people and life in general are suggested by the story of Argos?
2. A number of years have passed since Odysseus' adventure with the Cyclops. How has Odysseus changed?
3. Penelope represents characteristics that the Greeks admired in women. **a.** What qualities does she reveal about herself in her discussion with her housekeeper (lines 1111–1117)?  
**b.** In her interview with the beggar? **c.** How was she able to trick the suitors for three years?  
**d.** What does this ruse show about her?
4. The scene in which Penelope meets her husband Odysseus disguised as a beggar is an example of **dramatic irony**, for the reader knows something that Penelope does not know. Why do you think Odysseus keeps his identity a secret from his wife?

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to discuss Odysseus' reasons for his revenge upon the suitors. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. List the words and have students identify the part of speech of each as it is used in the selection.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to freewrite about a difficult challenge they have experienced—perhaps an academic contest or a sports event. Then tell them that Odysseus accepts a challenge to string and shoot a powerful bow.

### The Challenge

*The suitors summon Penelope to the hall and demand that she choose one of them at once. Penelope announces a challenge: she will marry whoever can string Odysseus' great bow and shoot an arrow through a row of twelve axle sockets, as Odysseus used to do. One by one the suitors try but fail to even bend the bow. The old beggar then asks for a turn. The suitors protest until both Penelope and Telemachus insist that he be given the bow.*

- 1 . . . And Odysseus took his time,  
turning the bow, tapping it, every inch, 1200  
for borings that termites might have made  
while the master of the weapon was abroad.  
The suitors were now watching him, and some  
jested among themselves:

"A bow lover!"

- "Dealer in old bows!"  
"Maybe he has one like it 1205  
at home!"

"Or has an itch to make one for himself."

- "See how he handles it, the sly old buzzard!"

And one disdainful suitor added this:

- 2 "May his fortune grow an inch for every inch he bends it!"

But the man skilled in all ways of contending, 1210  
satisfied by the great bow's look and heft,

- 3 like a musician, like a harper, when  
with quiet hand upon his instrument  
he draws between his thumb and forefinger  
a sweet new string upon a peg: so effortlessly 1215  
Odysseus in one motion strung the bow.  
Then slid his right hand down the cord and plucked it,  
so the taut gut vibrating hummed and sang  
a swallow's note.

In the hushed hall it smote the suitors

- 4 and all their faces changed. Then Zeus thundered 1220  
overhead, one loud crack for a sign.

- 5 And Odysseus laughed within him that the son  
of crooked-minded Cronus had flung that omen down.

### PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote explains Penelope's test to decide which suitor she will marry. After each suitor fails to meet the challenge, the old beggar requests a turn. Will he succeed? How will Penelope react if he does?

### The Challenge

After students have read "The Challenge," the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the analysis of Odysseus' development.

- 1 Odysseus expertly handles the bow.

- 2 Irony. Odysseus' fortune will grow as he bends bow and reclaims identity and kingdom.

- 3 Homeric simile. Comparison of Odysseus to harper emphasizes his dexterity and strength with bow.

- 4 Zeus thunders in support of Odysseus; other omens supporting Odysseus' successful return are that Telemachus has seen an eagle carrying a goose and Penelope has dreamed of eagle destroying geese. These omens are reported elsewhere in the epic.

- 5 Epithet. Appropriately, cunning Odysseus is supported by Zeus, "the son of crooked-minded Cronus."

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

After all the suitors have failed Penelope's challenge of shooting Odysseus' bow, the "beggar" accepts the challenge. Effortlessly, he strings the bow. As he draws back the taut string, he aims an arrow at the row of twelve ax-handle sockets.

6

**Characterization.** Ease with which Odysseus strings and shoots bow, when men in their prime have failed, shows his prodigious strength.

7

"Quietly" suggests repressed anger waiting to erupt.

8

**Figurative language.** Odysseus does not mean that the time has come to start preparing dinner; he means the time has come to "cook" the lords themselves.

9

**What does the phrase "true son of King Odysseus" suggest about Telemachus?** Like his father, he faces battle calmly and courageously.

## Odysseus' Revenge

1

**Metaphor.** Odysseus' arrows fall as thickly as rain.

2

Having won no "victory" but that over a defenseless woman and child, cowardly Antinous is ill-prepared for Odysseus' cunning, courage, and strength.

Upon release, the arrow flashes toward the target. Does the beggar meet the challenge? What will happen if he does?

## PRESENTATION

Contrast the bluster and bravado of the suitors with the quiet confidence of Odysseus and the growing self-possession of Telemachus.

Point out the understatement in Odysseus' comment about not disgracing Telemachus and

He picked one ready arrow from his table  
where it lay bare: the rest were waiting still  
in the quiver for the young men's turn to come.

1225

6 He nocked<sup>o</sup> it, let it rest across the handgrip,  
and drew the string and grooved butt of the arrow,  
aiming from where he sat upon the stool.

1227. **nocked:** placed an arrow against the string of the bow.

Now flashed

arrow from twanging bow clean as a whistle  
through every socket ring, and grazed not one,  
to thud with heavy brazen head beyond.

1230

Then quietly

7 Odysseus said:

"Telemachus, the stranger  
you welcomed in your hall has not disgraced you.  
I did not miss, neither did I take all day  
stringing the bow. My hand and eye are sound,  
not so contemptible as the young men say.

1235

8 The hour has come to cook their lordships' mutton—  
supper by daylight. Other amusements later,  
with song and harping that adorn a feast."

1240

He dropped his eyes and nodded, and the prince

9 Telemachus, true son of King Odysseus,  
belted his sword on, clapped hand to his spear,  
and with a clink and glitter of keen bronze  
stood by his chair, in the forefront near his father.

1245

## Odysseus' Revenge

Now shrugging off his rags the wildest fighter of the islands  
leapt and stood on the broad doorsill, his own bow in his hand.

1 He poured out at his feet a rain of arrows from the quiver  
and spoke to the crowd:

"So much for that. Your clean-cut game is over.

Now watch me hit a target that no man has hit before,  
if I can make this shot. Help me, Apollo."

1250

2 He drew to his fist the cruel head of an arrow for Antinous  
just as the young man leaned to lift his beautiful drinking  
cup,

embossed, two-handled, golden: the cup was in his fingers:  
the wine was even at his lips: and did he dream of death?

1255



the **foreshadowing** in his statement about the "hour . . . to cook their lordship's mutton." Emphasize the **imagery** in both the **Homeric simile** describing Odysseus' stringing and shooting of the bow and the realistic descriptions of the suitors' deaths.

Ask students to evaluate Odysseus' sense of justice. Are his acts of revenge justifiable?

How could he? In that revelry amid his throng of friends who would imagine a single foe—though a strong foe indeed—could dare to bring death's pain on him and darkness on his eyes?

Odysseus' arrow hit him under the chin and punched up to the feathers through his throat. 1260

3 Backward and down he went, letting the winecup fall from his shocked hand. Like pipes his nostrils jetted crimson runnels, a river of mortal red, and one last kick upset his table knocking the bread and meat to soak in dusty blood. 1265

4 Now as they craned to see their champion where he lay the suitors jostled in uproar down the hall, everyone on his feet. Wildly they turned and scanned 5 the walls in the long room for arms; but not a shield, not a good ashen spear was there for a man to take and throw. 1270

All they could do was yell in outrage at Odysseus:

"Foul! to shoot at a man! That was your last shot!"

"Your own throat will be slit for this!"

"Our finest lad is down!

You killed the best on Ithaca."

"Buzzards will tear your eyes out!"

For they imagined as they wished—that it was a wild shot, an unintended killing—fools, not to comprehend they were already in the grip of death. 1275

But glaring under his brows Odysseus answered:

6 "You yellow dogs, you thought I'd never make it 7 home from the land of Troy. You took my house to plunder. 1280

. . . You dared

bid for my wife while I was still alive.

Contempt was all you had for the gods who rule wide heaven, contempt for what men say of you hereafter.

Your last hour has come. You die in blood." 1285

As they all took this in, sickly green fear pulled at their entrails, and their eyes flickered looking for some hatch or hideaway from death.

3 Vivid visual imagery underscores suddenness and violence of Antinous' bloody death.

4 **Characterization.** Having followed Antinous blindly and having thought only of immediate pleasure, suitors are poorly prepared for battle. Their responses are almost childish. They are directly characterized as "fools."

5 **Why were the men unable to find arms?** Telemachus had hidden them in the vaulted store-room.

6 **Metaphor.** Suggests suitors are worthless and cowardly.

7 Odysseus reveals his identity, rebukes suitors for their contempt, and promises revenge.

8 Eurymachus is less brash and cruel than Antinous; he is quick to think of a response to Odysseus.

9 Eurymachus places blame on Antinous but is responsible for his own actions; **theme** of responsibility is central to *Odyssey*, as is shown by consequences of Odysseus' rash defiance of Cyclops and of his crew's destruction of Helios' cattle.

10 Plot to murder Telemachus was Antinous' idea, but Eurymachus and others complied.

11 *What does Odysseus mean when he says he would not refrain from revenge for the "whole treasures of your fathers"? Do you think Odysseus has adequate motivation for this attitude?* No amount of money could persuade him to spare the men. He is fighting for personal and family honor, not for wealth; suitors are in his house and have given their attentions to his wife.

12 Again, Odysseus makes clear that he intends to exact revenge.

13 **Characterization.** Eurymachus has courage and leadership that he has wasted in his cowardly, greedy pursuit of Penelope.

8 Eurymachus° alone could speak. He said:

1289. **Eurymachus** (yōō-rī'mə-kəs).

"If you are Odysseus of Ithaca come back,  
all that you say these men have done is true.  
Rash actions, many here, more in the countryside.  
But here he lies, the man who caused them all.

9 Antinous was the ringleader, he whipped us on  
to do these things. He cared less for a marriage  
than for the power Cronion has denied him  
as king of Ithaca. For that

10 he tried to trap your son and would have killed him.  
He is dead now and has his portion. Spare  
your own people. As for ourselves, we'll make  
restitution of wine and meat consumed,  
and add, each one, a tithe of twenty oxen  
with gifts of bronze and gold to warm your heart.  
Meanwhile we cannot blame you for your anger."

Odysseus glowered under his black brows  
and said:

11 "Not for the whole treasure of your fathers,  
all you enjoy, lands, flocks, or any gold  
put up by others, would I hold my hand.  
12 There will be killing till the score is paid.  
You forced yourselves upon this house. Fight your way out,  
or run for it, if you think you'll escape death.  
I doubt one man of you skins by."

They felt their knees fail, and their hearts—but heard  
Eurymachus for the last time rallying them.

13 "Friends," he said, "the man is implacable.  
Now that he's got his hands on bow and quiver  
he'll shoot from the big doorstone there  
until he kills us to the last man.

Fight, I say,  
let's remember the joy of it. Swords out!  
Hold up your tables to deflect his arrows.  
After me, everyone: rush him where he stands.  
If we can budge him from the door, if we can pass  
into the town, we'll call out men to chase him.  
This fellow with his bow will shoot no more."

He drew his own sword as he spoke, a broadsword of fine  
bronze, 1325

14 honed like a razor on either edge. Then crying hoarse and  
loud

he hurled himself at Odysseus. But the kingly man let fly  
an arrow at that instant, and the quivering feathered butt  
sprang to the nipple of his breast as the barb stuck in his  
liver.

The bright broadsword clanged down. He lurched and fell  
aside, 1330

pitching across his table. His cup, his bread and meat,

15 were spilt and scattered far and wide, and his head slammed  
on the ground.

Revulsion, anguish in his heart, with both feet kicking out,

16 he downed his chair, while the shrouding wave of mist closed  
on his eyes.

Amphinomus now came running at Odysseus, 1335

broadsword naked in his hand. He thought to make  
the great soldier give way at the door.

17 But with a spear throw from behind Telemachus hit him  
between the shoulders, and the lancehead drove  
clear through his chest. He left his feet and fell 1340

forward, thudding, forehead against the ground.

Telemachus swerved around him, leaving the long dark  
spear

planted in Amphinomus. If he paused to yank it out  
someone might jump him from behind or cut him down  
with a sword

at the moment he bent over. So he ran—ran from the tables 1345

to his father's side and halted, panting, saying:

"Father let me bring you a shield and spear,  
a pair of spears, a helmet.

I can arm on the run myself; I'll give

18 outfits to Eumaeus and this cowherd. 1350

Better to have equipment."

Said Odysseus:

"Run then, while I hold them off with arrows  
as long as the arrows last. When all are gone  
if I'm alone they can dislodge me."

Quick

#### 14

**Simile.** Eurymachus' broadsword is compared to a sharp razor. His weapon is clearly dangerous but will prove useless against Odysseus' skill with bow.

#### 15

**Alliteration.** Repetition of initial *s* in "split," "scattered," and "slammed" is combined with *onomatopoeia* in "split" and "slammed" to create sound image of Eurymachus' fall.

#### 16

**Metaphor.** Mist is effective metaphor for death because it suggests misty atmosphere of Hades, land of dead.

#### 17

Like his father, Telemachus exhibits strength, bravery, and intelligence in battle.

#### 18

The cowherd Philoities is only servant other than Eumaeus who has expressed loyalty to Odysseus.



## CLOSURE

Ask students to evaluate Odysseus' reasons for revenge. Have students discuss the idea that the end justifies the means.

19

Weapons were usually made of bronze; plumes were crests of horsehair.

20

As shown on p. 592, Greek war helmets protected not just head but entire face.

21

As she has promised, Athena stands beside Odysseus in battle, helping him defeat suitors.

22

**Homeric simile.** Comparison of suitors to fish emphasizes their helplessness at the hands of fate and the great "fisherman" Odysseus. Recalls earlier comparison of Odysseus' men to fish and Scylla to fisherman (ll. 652–656).

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Encourage cooperation by having students work in groups to complete one or more enrichment activities. One group might pretend to be on-the-spot newscasters reporting on one of Odysseus' adventures such as the challenge to suitors

or the battle with them. Another group might write and illustrate a children's book on one episode while one group makes a comic strip of an episode. Still other groups might memorize and present brief scenes to the class.

upon his father's word Telemachus  
ran to the room where spears and armor lay. 1355

He caught up four light shields, four pairs of spears,  
19 four helms of war high-plumed with flowing manes,  
and ran back, loaded down, to his father's side.

He was the first to pull a helmet on 1360  
and slide his bare arm in a buckler strap.

The servants armed themselves, and all three took their  
stand  
beside the master of battle.

While he had arrows  
he aimed and shot, and every shot brought down  
one of his huddling enemies. 1365

But when all barbs had flown from the bowman's fist,  
he leaned his bow in the bright entryway  
beside the door, and armed: a four-ply shield

20 hard on his shoulder, and a crested helm,  
horsetailed, nodding stormy upon his head. 1370  
then took his tough and bronze-shod spears. . . .

21 *Odysseus, Telemachus, and the two faithful servants kill every suitor. Several times Athena saves Odysseus' life by turning aside the suitors' deadly blows.*

And Odysseus looked around him, narrow-eyed,  
for any others who had lain hidden  
while death's black fury passed.

In blood and dust  
he saw that crowd all fallen, many and many slain. 1375

22 Think of a catch that fishermen haul in to a half-moon bay  
in a fine-meshed net from the whitecaps of the sea:  
how all are poured out on the sand, in throes for the salt sea,  
twitching their cold lives away in Helios' fiery air:  
so lay the suitors heaped on one another. 1380

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to compare the characteristics of Odysseus and Penelope. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. You may want to review with students their vocabulary cards or lists. Then divide students into groups to check one another's understanding of these unfamiliar words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to predict how Penelope will greet her husband after his absence of twenty years. Have students analyze what her actions reveal about her and about Odysseus.

### Reading Check

1. What sign does Zeus send as an omen?
2. Who is the first suitor to be slain?
3. How does Eurymachus try to bargain for his life?
4. How does Odysseus hold off the suitors when they attempt to rush him?

### For Study and Discussion

#### Analyzing and Interpreting the Epic

1. At what point in this episode does Odysseus reveal his identity to the suitors?
2. Eurymachus tries to convince Odysseus to spare the suitors' lives. Restate his arguments in your own words. What reason does Odysseus give for refusing?
3. Do you think Odysseus' revenge is excessive? Give reasons for your opinion.
4. Why are the stringing of Odysseus' bow and the slaying of the suitors considered the climax of the *Odyssey*?

### Penelope Tests Odysseus

*After twenty years of waiting for Odysseus, Penelope hesitates to acknowledge the stranger as her husband. She tests him with a secret only Odysseus could know.*

- 1 Greathearted Odysseus, home at last,  
was being bathed now by Eurynome  
and rubbed with golden oil, and clothed again  
in a fresh tunic and a cloak. Athena  
lent him beauty, head to foot. She made him  
taller, and massive, too, with crisping hair  
in curls like petals of wild hyacinth  
but all red-golden. Think of gold infused  
on silver by a craftsman, whose fine art  
Hephaestus<sup>o</sup> taught him, or Athena—one  
whose work moves to delight: just so she lavished  
beauty over Odysseus' head and shoulders.  
He sat then in the same chair by the pillar,  
facing his silent wife, and said:

"Strange woman,

- the immortals of Olympus made you hard,  
2 harder than any. Who else in the world  
would keep aloof as you do from her husband  
if he returned to her from years of trouble,  
cast on his own land in the twentieth year?

1385

1390 1390. **Hephaestus** (hī-fēs'tās):  
god of metalworking.

1395

### READING CHECK

1. Thunders (p. 645).
2. Antinous (p. 646).
3. Offers to restore wine, meat and to add twenty oxen and gifts of bronze and gold (p. 648).
4. Uses bow and arrows until Telemachus brings shield, spears, and helmet (p. 649).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. After he kills Antinous.
2. Eurymachus says Antinous forced others to follow him and that suitors will return wine and meat as well as twenty oxen, bronze, and gold. Odysseus says he has score to settle. Since suitors forced their way in, they must fight their way out.
3. Answers will vary. Odysseus knew that suitors would take advantage of weakness and felt that his vengeance against suitors was justified.
4. Culmination of Odysseus' struggle for home and identity.

### PREREADING FOCUS

Ask students what the headnote suggests about Penelope's character.

### Penelope Tests Odysseus

After students have read "Penelope Tests Odysseus," the margin annotations will help you in guiding students' evaluations of Odysseus and Penelope.

#### 1

**Epithet.** "Greathearted" suggests capacity for love and generosity.

#### 2

Penelope is cautious and crafty; having waited twenty years for his return, she is determined to make no mistakes.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

As Eurynome bathes Odysseus, Athena makes him younger and more handsome. When Odysseus chides Penelope for her aloofness, she orders his bed made up for him outside the bed chamber. He knows why this is impossible.

3

*What is Odysseus suggesting about Penelope?* She is hard-hearted, cruel.

4

**Diction.** Penelope's shift in pronouns shows her uncertainty about Odysseus' identity, her alternating hopes and fears.

5

Believing the battle with suitors to be his last challenge, he does not expect Penelope's last test and vents his frustration with this final delay.

6

**Symbol.** Even in their youth, Odysseus and Penelope were associated with Athena, using her symbol, the olive tree, to build their bed.

7

Before Trojan War, Odysseus was skilled as a craftsman.

8

*How does Penelope test Odysseus' identity? Why does she grow "tremulous and weak" when Odysseus says the bed was made of an olive trunk?* She pretends bed, secretly hewed and shaped from an olive stump, can be moved. Her reaction reveals she finally is certain that he is her husband.

## PRESENTATION

Tell students that the reunion between Odysseus and Penelope is one of the most famous and most moving love scenes of world literature.

Ask students if Penelope is right to be so cautious. Have them analyze the reasons for her

behavior. Help students understand and appreciate the final simile comparing Odysseus' longing for his wife to the longing of an exhausted swimmer for the shore.

Nurse, make up a bed for me to sleep on.

1400

3 Her heart is iron in her breast."

Penelope

spoke to Odysseus now. She said:

"Strange man,

if man you are . . . This is no pride on my part nor scorn for you—not even wonder, merely.

4 I know so well how you—how he—appeared boarding the ship for Troy. But all the same . . .

1405

Make up his bed for him, Eurycleia.

Place it outside the bedchamber my lord

built with his own hands. Pile the big bed

with fleeces, rugs, and sheets of purest linen."

1410

With this she tried him to the breaking point, and he turned on her in a flash raging:

5 "Woman, by heaven you've stung me now! Who dared to move my bed?

No builder had the skill for that—unless

1415

a god came down to turn the trick. No mortal in his best days could budge it with a crowbar.

There is our pact and pledge, our secret sign, built into that bed—my handiwork and no one else's!

6 An old trunk of olive

1420

grew like a pillar on the building plot,

and I laid out our bedroom round that tree,

lined up the stone walls, built the walls and roof, gave it a doorway and smooth-fitting doors.

Then I lopped off the silvery leaves and branches, hewed and shaped that stump from the roots up into a bedpost, drilled it, let it serve

1425

7 as model for the rest. I planed them all,

inlaid them all with silver, gold and ivory,

and stretched a bed between—a pliant web

1430

of oxhide thongs dyed crimson.

There's our sign!

I know no more. Could someone else's hand

have sawn that trunk and dragged the frame away?"

8 Their secret! as she heard it told, her knees

grew tremulous and weak, her heart failed her.

1435



With eyes brimming tears she ran to him,  
throwing her arms around his neck, and kissed him,  
murmuring:

**9** “Do not rage at me, Odysseus!  
No one ever matched your caution! Think  
what difficulty the gods gave: they denied us  
life together in our prime and flowering years, 1440  
kept us from crossing into age together.  
Forgive me, don’t be angry. I could not  
welcome you with love on sight! I armed myself  
long ago against the frauds of men, 1445  
impostors who might come—and all those many  
whose underhanded ways bring evil on! . . .  
But here and now, what sign could be so clear  
as this of our own bed?  
No other man has ever laid eyes on it— 1450  
only my own slave, Actoris,<sup>o</sup> that my father  
sent with me as a gift—she kept our door.  
You make my stiff heart know that I am yours.”

Now from his breast into his eyes the ache  
**10** of longing mounted, and he wept at last, 1455  
**11** his dear wife, clear and faithful, in his arms,  
**12** longed for as the sunwarmed earth is longed for by a  
swimmer  
spent in rough water where his ship went down  
under Poseidon’s blows, gale winds and tons of sea.  
Few men can keep alive through a big surf 1460  
to crawl, clotted with brine, on kindly beaches  
in joy, in joy, knowing the abyss behind:  
and so she too rejoiced, her gaze upon her husband,  
**13** her white arms round him pressed as though forever.

## Postscript

*The following morning Odysseus and Telemachus set out for the country estate of Laertes, Odysseus’ father. Their happy reunion is interrupted by the arrival of angry relatives of the slain suitors, armed for battle. Athena appears and commands them to make peace. So ends the Odyssey, with Odysseus restored to his family and to his kingdom.*

**9**  
Penelope defends her own caution by cleverly pointing out that Odysseus, too, is cautious.

**10**  
Odysseus weeps for joy.

**11**  
Emphasizes theme of Penelope’s loyalty.

**12**  
**Homeric simile.** Buffeted about by Poseidon in his wanderings, Odysseus has longed for strength and stability of Penelope as a swimmer longs for shore.

**13**  
Having passed his last test, the hero Odysseus has finally returned home to his Penelope.

## Postscript

**1**  
Ancient tradition called for blood revenge, but Athena initiates a new age of peace and forgiveness.

**2**  
Homer’s first epic, the *Iliad*, begins with the Trojan War and the wrath of Achilles; his last epic, the *Odyssey*, ends in peace.

## CLOSURE

Ask students to identify the characteristics of Odysseus that make him heroic. Relate the qualities of Odysseus to those of his wife Penelope and to the values of his society.

## READING CHECK

1. Makes him bigger and changes his hair (p. 651).
2. She is silent and aloof (p. 652).
3. So as not to be deceived (p. 653).
4. He knows secret of bed (pp. 652–653).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Because of his transformation, she thinks he may be a god playing a trick on her.
2. She orders Eurycleia to place bed outside chamber—impossible, since bed was built around tree trunk.
3. She is, like her husband, cunning: she unravels her weaving every night, makes them string the great bow, and tests her husband to be certain of his identity.

## LITERARY ELEMENTS

Most Homeric similes and epithets are identified in margin annotations; others are discussed in the *Teacher's Manual*.

## Answers

1. Homer uses vivid imagery to make the action exciting: “whipping his long rod” and ripping the fish from the surface “to dangle wriggling through the air.”
2. The simile is effective because Odysseus’ handling of his great bow is like a musician’s care of a harp. Odysseus strings his bow as a harpist would draw “a sweet new string upon a peg,” then plucks it so that “the taut gut vibrating” hums and sings “a swallow’s note.”

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Ask students to write a paper about or to debate the question of whether Penelope recognizes Odysseus before her trick about the bed. Refer to Fitzgerald’s article “A Commentary on Odysseus and Penelope” in the *Teacher's Manual* (pp.

288–290) for help in guiding your students. Encourage them to use support from the *Odyssey* to agree or disagree with Fitzgerald’s theory.

Some of your students might like an alternative writing assignment focusing on Penelope. Ask them to agree or disagree with the tribute

## Reading Check

1. How does Athena once again transform Odysseus?
2. Why does Odysseus accuse Penelope of being hardhearted?
3. Why is Penelope so cautious?
4. What convinces her that the stranger is Odysseus?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Epic

1. What does Penelope imply by the phrase “if man you are” in line 1403?
2. What test does Penelope devise to tell whether the stranger is really Odysseus?
3. How does Penelope show that she and Odysseus are well-matched?

## Literary Elements

### Characteristics of the Epic

#### Homeric Simile

As you know, a simile is a comparison of two dissimilar actions or objects that are usually linked by *like*, *as*, or some other connecting word. A **Homeric simile** is an extended comparison of two actions or objects that develops mounting excitement and usually ends in a climax. In this passage, Scylla seizing Odysseus’ men is compared to a fisherman landing a fish:

A man surf-casting on a point of rock for bass or mackerel, whipping his long rod to drop the sinker and the bait far out, will hook a fish and rip it from the surface to dangle wriggling through the air:

so these  
were borne aloft in spasms toward the cliff.

Notice how the simile is extended by describing the actions of a fisherman and the parallel actions of the monster. How does Homer’s choice of details make the action rise in excitement?

- Look at the simile Homer uses to describe Odysseus’ stringing of the bow (lines 1212–1216). Why is this simile strikingly effective?

Find other examples of Homeric similes and tell how the comparisons make the actions more vivid and gripping.

#### The Epithet

Like the extended simile, the **epithet** is a favorite device of the ancient epic poets. An epithet is a word or phrase used to characterize someone or something, as in “the *winedark* sea.” Homer refers to Odysseus as “raider of cities,” “the wildest fighter of the islands,” and “Laertes’ son.” The gods and goddesses are often identified by epithets. Zeus, for example, is called “Father of gods and men,” “god of the zenith,” “the lord of cloud,” and “All Provident.” Find other epithets Homer uses in the *Odyssey*.

paid to her by Odysseus in his beggar disguise: "My lady, never a man in the wide world should have a fault to find with you." Remind them to support their opinions with evidence from their reading.

Arrange the showing of additional films on the

*Odyssey*, such as the excellent three-part series from the Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corporation. Encourage students to read books about ancient Greece and to report on the social customs, clothing, and weapons of Odysseus' day.

Some students might like to make and share comic strips about Odysseus' adventures.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Analyzing Odysseus as Epic Hero

In the opening lines of this translation of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus describes himself as "formidable for guile in peace and war." Do you think Odysseus characterizes himself accurately? Why or why not?

The hero of an epic is generally larger than life. He is stronger, braver, and more clever than the other characters. Sometimes his powers are superhuman. Write a brief composition in which you analyze Odysseus as an epic hero. Use evidence from the poem to support your analysis.

### ► Analyzing the Role of the Olympians

In Homer's epics the Olympian gods and goddesses frequently intervene in human affairs. In the *Iliad*, they join the battle of the Greeks and the Trojans on the plains outside Troy. They take sides: Athena and Hera fight for the Greeks, Apollo and Aphrodite for the Trojans. The gods intervene in several ways—by starting arguments, by shielding warriors, or by changing the course of an arrow.

How do the gods and goddesses affect the action of the *Odyssey*? Choose several episodes that illustrate *divine intervention* and tell in a brief composition the motives for these interventions and their consequences.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## Extending Your Study

### Preparing a Report

The excavation of Troy is in itself an exciting story. Heinrich Schliemann, a German businessman, found the remains of the city of Ilium at a place called Hissarlik, in Asia Minor. After digging under layers of ruins, he found what is believed to be the ancient city of Troy.

Consult an encyclopedia or a book about Schliemann's work. Prepare a report in which you discuss his major discoveries.

## About the Translator

### Robert Fitzgerald (1910–1985)

Fitzgerald was born in Geneva, New York, and spent his childhood in Springfield, Illinois. He attended the Choate School in Connecticut and then entered Harvard. After graduating from college he worked as a reporter. Fitzgerald began writing when he was in high school and while at college had several poems published in *Poetry* magazine. He was well known as a poet, critic, and translator. He collaborated with Dudley Fitts on translations of several classical Greek plays. He worked on his translation of the *Odyssey* while he was living in Italy. In 1961 his version of the poem received the first Bollingen Award for translation of poetry. In 1983 he brought out a translation of a classical Latin epic, the *Aeneid* by Virgil, the last major work before his death.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

### Analyzing Odysseus as Epic Hero

Students will doubtless agree with Odysseus' estimate of himself as "formidable for guile in peace and war." They should be able to provide convincing evidence of his heroic qualities in their compositions.

### Analyzing the Role of the Olympians

The epic contains numerous instances of divine intervention. Students might consider, for instance, why Polyphemus' prayer is answered and Odysseus' offering is ignored.

## EXTENDING YOUR STUDY

In consulting encyclopedias and biographies such as Marjorie Braymer's *The Walls of Windy Troy* and Robert Payne's *The Gold of Troy*, students will discover that Heinrich Schliemann had a childhood interest in Homer. He made some minor discoveries in Greece in 1868 and then began the quest for Troy, which he believed to be on the hill of Hissarlik. He began to dig there without asking permission of the Turks who owned the property and initiated an ongoing conflict with Turkish officials. After marrying, he resumed digging on Hissarlik. In May of 1873, he and his team discovered and smuggled out Greek artifacts.

However, later excavations by William Dörpfeld and Carl Blegen proved that Schliemann had discovered the site of at least seven different cities. One of them is believed to be Priam's city. Schliemann's hasty digging destroyed valuable evidence, but he is responsible for much of the interest in and rediscovery of what was once thought to be a merely mythic city.



## PRESENTATION

Review the story of the Lotus-Eaters from p. 601 of the *Odyssey*. Then read the poem aloud, emphasizing its languid atmosphere, as shown in its **imagery** and **figurative language**.

Ask students why the poem begins with Odys-

seus' vigorous exhortation to "Courage." Point out that Odysseus' strong spirit contrasts with the indolence and irresponsibility of his men who eat the Lotus-plant and that Tennyson emphasizes the effect of the lotus plant by leaving the men in the land of the Lotus-eaters.

In closing, ask students to compare Homer's tale of the Lotus-Eaters to Tennyson's poem. Have students analyze how Tennyson expands part of the story to create **mood**.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote identifies Tennyson's "The Lotus-Eaters" as an allusion to events in Homer's *Odyssey*. How do Tennyson's descriptions of the land and the Lotus-Eaters enhance the tale?

## The Lotus-Eaters

After students have read "The Lotus-Eaters," the margin annotations will assist you in explaining literary elements and identifying **allusions** to the *Odyssey*.

1

**Imagery.** Introduces mood of passivity: men will be rolled to shore rather than rowing themselves.

2

**Personification.** Air is personified as "languid," "swooning" and compared in **simile** to someone dreaming, creating dream-like atmosphere.

3

**Imagery.** Recurring images of downward motion ("downward smoke," "fall," and "slow-dropping") reinforce mood of passivity.

4

Changelessness is tempting because it appears to offer peace; however, it also prevents growth.

5

**Allusion.** Reference to Lotus-eaters here and in title connects poem to *Odyssey* and clarifies that speaker in first line is Odysseus.

# The Lotus-Eaters

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

*You have read the episode of the Lotus-Eaters (lines 65–91). After Odysseus' men eat the lotus plant, they have no desire to go home and must be forced back to the ships.*

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson expanded the incident into a famous poem. In the first section of the poem, which follows, Odysseus speaks to his men as they first sight the shore. How does Tennyson suggest a mood of indolence?*

"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land,  
1 "This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."

In the afternoon they came unto a land  
In which it seemèd always afternoon.

2 All round the coast the languid air did swoon,  
Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.  
Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;

3 And, like a downward smoke, the slender stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,  
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn,<sup>o</sup> did go;  
And some through wavering lights and shadows broke,  
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.

11. **lawn:** a thin, sheer fabric.

They saw the gleaming river seaward flow.  
From the inner land; far off, three mountaintops,  
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,  
Stood sunset-flushed; and, dewed with showery drops,  
Up-clomb<sup>o</sup> the shadowy pine above the woven copse.<sup>o</sup>

18. **clomb:** climbed. **copse:** a thick growth of small trees.

The charmèd sunset lingered low adown  
In the red west; through mountain clefts the dale  
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down<sup>o</sup>  
Bordered with palm, and many a winding vale  
And meadow, set with slender galingale,<sup>o</sup>

21. **down:** rolling, upland countryside.

4 A land where all things always seemed the same!  
And round about the keel with faces pale,

23. **galingale** (gāl'in-gāl'): an aromatic plant of the ginger family.

Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,  
5 The mild-eyed melancholy Lotus-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem, Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave To each, but whoso did receive of them	30
6 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave Far, far away did seem to mourn and rave On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,	
7 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave; And deep asleep he seemed, yet all awake, And music in his ears his beating heart did make.	35
They sat them down upon the yellow sand, Between the sun and moon upon the shore;	
8 And sweet it was to dream of fatherland, Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar,	40
9 Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.	
10 Then someone said, "We will return no more"; And all at once they sang, "Our island home Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."	45

6  
**Symbol.** Lotus-plant causes rejection of life's struggles, symbolized by "gushing of the wave."

7  
State of living death.

8  
Dreams of home imply knowledge of responsibility and perhaps some guilt. Thoughts of home are also important in *Odyssey*.

9  
**Metaphor.** "Wandering fields of barren foam" are the seas.

10  
In rejecting life and home, men reject sources of identity, which is a major **theme** in *Odyssey*; in epic, Odysseus forcefully brings men back to ship, not allowing this rejection.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### About the Artist

Sir Edward Poynter was an English painter, born in Paris and educated in England and Europe. He was well-known for his work with watercolors and oils, and for his stained glass design. Poynter was named president of the Royal Academy in 1896 and served until 1918. He specialized in historical subjects from the ancient world and embellished narrative themes with architectural detail and a polished finish.



*On the Terrace* by Sir Edward Poynter (1836–1919). Oil on panel.  
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool



## PRESENTATION

This poem can be taught with the Penelope episode in the *Odyssey* or as a separate lesson. Consider a day of special reports, art projects, and readings on "Women of the *Odyssey*."

Read the poem expressively and ask students

to tell who is speaking and why the speaker remembers Penelope. Ask students to discuss whether it is more difficult to have dangerous adventures as Odysseus does or to wait as Penelope does. Relate the speaker to Penelope and to the woman in Poynter's painting.

Ask students to identify similarities between the **speaker** and Penelope. Emphasize that human feelings and relationships have not changed in the centuries between Odysseus' time and ours.

# An Ancient Gesture

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY

*In this poem Edna St. Vincent Millay draws on the story of Penelope's web.  
What contrast is drawn between Penelope and Odysseus in the second stanza?*

I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron:

1 Penelope did this too.

And more than once: you can't keep weaving all day

And undoing it all through the night;

Your arms get tired, and the back of your neck gets tight; 5

And along towards morning, when you think it will never be  
light,

And your husband has been gone, and you don't know  
where, for years,

Suddenly you burst into tears;

There is simply nothing else to do.

2 And I thought, as I wiped my eyes on the corner of my apron: 10

This is an ancient gesture, authentic, antique,

In the very best tradition, classic, Greek;

3 Ulysses did this too.

But only as a gesture,—a gesture which implied

4 To the assembled throng that he was much too moved to speak. 15

He learned it from Penelope . . .

5 Penelope, who really cried.

## PREREADING FOCUS

The headnote relates Millay's "An Ancient Gesture" to Penelope's story in Homer's *Odyssey*, and it prompts the reader to analyze the contrast Millay draws between Penelope and Odysseus. You may want to stress this contrast in discussing Millay's poem as it characterizes male and female stereotypes.

## An Ancient Gesture

After students have read Millay's poem, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding the discussion of **allusions** to the *Odyssey* and in identifying the poem's universal qualities and appeal.

1

**Allusion.** Reference to Penelope, faithful wife in *Odyssey*, makes poem more universal. Speaker of the poem, like Penelope, awaits her husband's return.

2

**Symbol.** Gesture connects situations and emotions of women of all times and places.

3

Questions sincerity of emotions of Ulysses (another name for Odysseus) and perhaps those of all men.

4

Suggests that Ulysses was concerned with public opinion and willing to use empty gestures to achieve power.

5

Implies that emotions of Penelope, and perhaps all women, are more earnest and intense than those of men.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to compare and contrast an excerpt from Alexander Pope's translation of the *Odyssey* with a passage from Robert Fitzgerald's translation.

## PRESENTATION

This section offers students experience in comparing and contrasting different translations: in this case, Alexander Pope's and Robert Fitzgerald's translations of the *Odyssey*. You may want to divide students into small discussion groups to

share ideas about the two translations. After each group has responded to the questions in the text, have them prepare written responses to present orally in class.

Although the different groups may vary in their opinions and in their support of opinions,

## COMPARING TRANSLATIONS

1. Both Pope and Fitzgerald emphasize Odysseus' close examination of bow, derision of the suitors, clap of thunder, actual shot, Odysseus' speech, and triumphant resolution.

2. Pope creates new lines and elaborates upon others (ll. 9–12, 24–27, 30–31, 35–38, and 41–44). Unlike Fitzgerald, Pope never uses Odysseus' name, referring to him as "he" or "master." In addition, Pope portrays Odysseus as pompous and spiteful, whereas Fitzgerald characterizes him as proud and noble.

3. Diction in these translations reflects poetic standards and audience expectations of two very different time periods.

4. Pope's formal diction and complex syntax suit his purpose of entertaining an eighteenth-century audience and proving his own poetic skill. Fitzgerald's less formal, but no less poetic diction, serves to make Homer's poetry more accessible to a twentieth-century audience.

### The Odyssey

1

Pope uses *Master* to refer to Odysseus.

2

Pope was noted for his mastery of the couplet form used throughout this translation.

# DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

## Comparing Translations

The *Odyssey* has been translated many times, in prose and in verse. Alexander Pope (1688–1744), a great English poet, translated the entire *Iliad* and several books of the *Odyssey*. Pope's translations are written chiefly in *heroic couplets*, pairs of rhyming iambic pentameter lines, a verse form in which he excelled.

Compare the following passage in Pope's translation of the *Odyssey* with the passage on pages 645–646 of your textbook. What do both Pope and Fitzgerald emphasize in their respective translations of this dramatic scene? Where do they differ in their accounts? How would you describe the *diction*—or choice of words—in each translation? Does the language provide a clue to each translator's purpose?

- 1 And now his well-known bow the Master bore,  
Turn'd on all sides, and view'd it o'er and o'er;  
2 Lest time or worms had done the weapon wrong,  
Its owner absent, and untried so long.  
While some deriding: "How he turns the bow!  
Some other like it sure the man must know,  
Or else would copy; or in bows he deals;  
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he steals."—  
"Heav'n to this wretch" (another cried) "be kind!"  
And bless, in all to which he stands inclin'd,  
With such good fortune as he now shall find."  
Heedless he heard them: but disdain'd reply,  
The bow perusing with exactest eye.  
Then, as some heav'nly minstrel, taught to sing  
High notes responsive to the trembling string,  
To some new strain when he adapts the lyre,  
Or the dumb° lute refits with vocal wire,

5

10

15

17. **dumb**: mute or silent.

students will probably gain some insight from each group's presentation.

Relaxes, strains, and draws them to and fro;  
So the great master drew the mighty bow:  
And drew with ease. One hand aloft display'd  
The bending horns, and one the string essay'd.<sup>o</sup>  
From his essaying hand the string let fly

20

21. **essay'd**: tested or tried.

3 Twang'd short and sharp like the shrill swallow's cry.

4 A gen'ral horror ran thro'<sup>o</sup> all the race,  
Sunk was each heart, and pale was ev'ry face.

24. **thro'**: through.

25

Signs from above ensued: th' unfolding sky  
In lightning burst; Jove thunder'd from on high.  
Fired at the call of Heav'n's almighty Lord,  
He snatch'd the shaft that glitter'd on the board  
(Fast by, the rest lay sleeping in the sheath,  
But soon to fly, the messengers of Death).

30

Now, sitting as he was, the cord he drew,  
Thro' every ringlet leveling his view;  
Then notch'd the shaft, releas'd, and gave it wing;  
The whizzing arrow vanish'd from the string,  
Sung on direct, and threaded ev'ry ring.  
The solid gate its fury scarcely bounds;  
Pierc'd thro' and thro', the solid gate resounds.

35

5 Then to the Prince: "Nor have I wrought thee shame;

Nor err'd this hand unfaithful to its aim;  
Nor prov'd the toil too hard; nor have I lost  
That ancient vigor once my pride and boast.  
Ill I deserv'd these haughty Peers' disdain;  
Now let them comfort their dejected train,  
In sweet repast their present hour employ  
Nor wait till ev'ning for the genial joy:  
Then to the lute's soft voice prolong the night;  
Music, the banquet's most refin'd delight."

40

He said, then gave a nod; and at the word  
Telemachus girds on his shining sword.  
Fast by his father's side he takes his stand:  
The beamy jav'lin lightens in his hand.

45

50

3

Repetition of initial *sh* sounds in "short," "sharp," and "shrill" echoes sound of bowstring.

4

Pope elaborates on the suitors' horrified reaction to Odysseus' skill with the bow.

5

"Nor have I wrought thee shame" is example of Pope's formal eighteenth-century usage.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to write an essay in which they develop the ideas presented in one of several quotations relating to the *Odyssey*.

## PRESENTATION

The topics suggested by the quotations have been thoroughly considered in previous presentations, questions, and activities. Tell students to read the quotations thoughtfully and then select one quotation for closer study. Encourage each

student to examine closely the selected quotation, writing on scratch paper or in a journal entry the two or three words that contain the focal points of the quotation. Have students consider these words as key ideas for further elaboration.

## RESPONDING TO AN INTERPRETATION

With the quotation's central idea in mind, students should each find two or three short passages in the *Odyssey* to cite as evidence in their essays.

W. H. D. Rouse's point that Odysseus is clever and resourceful can be supported by ll. 70–91, 295–299, 339–347, 544–593, and 793–823.

In discussing the quotation by Ennis Rees, students can cite ll. 153–156 as evidence of Odysseus' folly; ll. 946–949, 955–957, and 1251 as evidence of his faith in gods; and ll. 230–233 and 295–299 as well as his beggar's disguise as evidence of his self-control and intelligence.

Andre Michalopoulos' comment about Odysseus' morality can be supported by the contrast with Cyclops (ll. 102, 200–206, 299–301), and that Odysseus longed for home can be supported by ll. 10–20 and 1189–1198.

C. M. Bowra's observation about Homer's vivid imagery is supported by ll. 310–327, 634–646, 835–844, 1259–1265, 1327–1334, 1376–1380, 1381–1392, and 1420–1431.

# PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

## Responding to an Interpretation

In a short essay, develop the ideas presented in one of these quotations. Cite specific passages in the poem to support your statements.

*The Odyssey* takes its name from its hero, Odysseus. . . . The name itself signifies "the man of all-odds," of every chance and circumstance. Odysseus' resourcefulness is the wonder of men and gods alike. . . . No wonder others admire him, and he admires himself in an engagingly frank way.

W. H. D. Rouse,  
Preface to *The Odyssey*

Odysseus is a good example of a man who indulges in his share of folly but who wins through successfully by faith in the gods and the employment of as much self-control and intelligence as he can command.

Ennis Rees,  
*The Illiad of Homer*

This tale of adventure built on a sound moral foundation is the story of a man striving against obstacles within and without himself to get back to his home. It is also the narrative of the home which is in desperate need of [the man] who has been absent for twenty years.

Andre Michalopoulos,  
*Homer*

If Homer was blind . . . he remembered well what he once saw. Few poets have the gift of conveying visible things so clearly as he can.

C. M. Bowra,  
*Ancient Greek Literature*

## For Further Reading

### Homeric Epics

Finley, Moses I., *The World of Odysseus* (Viking Press, 1977; paperback, Penguin)

In this study of ancient Greek civilization, Finley uses Homer's poems as historical evidence of what the world of Odysseus was really like.

Fitzgerald, Robert, translator, *The Odyssey* (paperback, Doubleday, 1961)

This verse translation contains an interesting postscript on the art of translating and helpful notes on the background of the poem.

Lattimore, Richmond, translator, *The Iliad* (University of Chicago Press, 1975)

The action of this epic, set in the tenth year of the Trojan War, reaches its climax in the battle between Hector, champion of the Trojans, and Achilles, greatest of the Greek warriors. This translation is in verse.

Rouse, W. H. D., translator, *The Iliad* (paperback, New American Library, 1954)

The great epic of the Trojan War is told in vivid prose.

### Classical Mythology

Asimov, Isaac, *Words from the Myths* (paperback, New American Library, 1969)

The author retells the Greek myths simply and clearly, and explains the influence of myths on modern language and life.

Bulfinch, Thomas, *Bulfinch's Mythology* (Crowell, 1970; paperback, New American Library)

Here, in two volumes, is the author's retelling of the Greek and Roman myths, Norse sagas, and European legends of chivalry.

Hamilton, Edith, *Mythology* (Little, Brown, 1942; paperback, New American Library, 1971)

The renowned classicist retells the great Greek, Roman, and Norse myths in a way that preserves the excitement of the originals.

### Other Epics

*The Aeneid of Virgil*, translated by Allen Mandelbaum (paperback, Bantam, 1981)

Here is a vigorous, modern version of the famous epic that records and celebrates the adventures of Aeneas and the founding of Rome.

*Beowulf*, translated by Michael Alexander (paperback, Penguin, 1973)

In this Old English epic, the hero Beowulf slays the monster Grendel in hand-to-hand combat, then destroys Grendel's mother in an exciting underwater struggle.

*The Epic of Gilgamesh*, translated by Nancy K. Sandars (paperback, Penguin, 1960)

The earliest known epic recounts the adventures of King Gilgamesh in his search for glory and the secret of eternal life.

*Ramayana: A Shortened Modern Prose Version*, translated by R. K. Narayan (Viking Press, 1972)

This great Indian epic is said to have been composed in the first century A.D.

### Ancient Civilizations

Carcopino, Jerome, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (Yale University Press, 1940; paperback, Yale University Press, 1960)

Here are illuminating accounts of the Romans and their city at the height of the Roman Empire.

Bowra, Cecil M., *The Greek Experience* (paperback, New American Library, 1957)

The author provides a fascinating interpretation of life in Greece from the time of Homer to the fall of Athens.

Cottrell, Leonard, *The Anvil of Civilization* (paperback, New American Library, 1957)

Here is an archaeological history of the ancient cultures of the world: Egyptian, Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Cretan, Hebrew, Phoenician, Persian, and Greek.

### FOR FURTHER READING

Students should be encouraged to read other myths and epics as well as pertinent background works. Homer's *Iliad* and Moses I. Finley's *The World of Odysseus* are particularly relevant. Book reports and other presentations provide excellent forums for discussion and for sharing discoveries with other class members.

# TEACHING GUIDE

## THE NOVEL

### OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

Many modern critics have said that the novel is the most important modern literary form; only the novel, with its length, can capture the multiplicity of modern life. And even though the types of novels written have changed since Dickens' time, the novel's basic elements—plot, character, setting, point of view, and theme—remain the same. This unit introduces students to the novel and its basic elements, challenges them to read critically, and provides them with a basic knowledge of the genre, which they can apply to future reading and interpretation of novels and of creative prose in general.

The entire story line and, with a few minor exceptions, all the characters of *Great Expectations* will be found in this abridged version. This novel lends itself to abridgement particularly well: Dickens wrote the novel in serial form for a magazine and often added material to meet the requirements of an installment.

Although students should not limit their appreciation of *Great Expectations* to a personal identification with Pip, Pip's youthfulness, his struggle for maturity, and the intriguing nature of his problems should create for many students an immediate interest in the story and its theme. Though complicated, *Great Expectations* is first a good story. Understandable, suspenseful, and filled with Dickensian humor, the novel also has a strong emotional appeal.

*Great Expectations* is a novel about youth, disillusionment, and the transition into adulthood. Other famous novels in this category are J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, John Knowles's *A Separate Peace*, and Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. Pip, the protagonist of *Great Expectations*, finds that he is deluded about the most basic things in his life: he is stripped of his pride, brought to a kinder humility. His changes are painful, but he emerges from them a better person, more mature and more truly loving, than he was before.

The novel has been divided into three parts, or stages. Questions and exercises following each stage focus on the literary elements of character, plot, setting, point of view, and theme; on understanding details; on the history, analysis, and differentiation between words; and on the difference between static and dynamic characters and the importance of a story's climax.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE UNIT

The aims of this unit are for the student:

- To demonstrate understanding of significant details in the development of a central plot and several subplots in a longer work of fiction
- To demonstrate recognition and understanding of comedy, suspense, and climax in the development of plot

- To analyze the growth and changes in main characters and draw inferences about their personalities, attitudes, and relationships
- To demonstrate ability to classify characters as major, minor, static, dynamic, foil, eccentric
- To demonstrate understanding of the use of descriptive details to depict a scene, to create mood or atmosphere, and to connect episodes
- To identify themes that the novel explores
- To suggest symbolic meanings for details of characters and setting
- To predict future developments after reading Stage 1 and Stage 2
- To expand vocabulary by analyzing word histories, word structures, and synonyms
- To write expository compositions of evaluation and comparison
- To write a descriptive composition that conveys a main impression

### CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

The following concepts and skills are treated in this unit:

#### Close Reading

Guidelines for Reading a Novel 666

#### Literary Elements and Reading Skills

Novel 666

Characters 726, 775, 831

Plot 727, 776, 832

Setting 728, 776, 832

Point of View 728

Theme 728, 776, 833

Foils 832

Static and Dynamic Characters 832

Climax 832

#### Language and Vocabulary Skills

Learning Word Histories 728

Differentiating Meanings 777

Analyzing Words from Latin Roots 833

#### Writing and Other Expression Skills

Analyzing Methods of Characterization 729

Describing the Setting 777

Expressing an Opinion 833

Comparing the Short Story with the Novel 833



SELECTION	LITERARY ELEMENTS AND READING SKILLS	LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY SKILLS	WRITING AND OTHER EXPRESSION SKILLS
Guidelines for Reading a Novel 666	Novel 666		
<i>Great Expectations</i> Charles Dickens 668	Characters 726, 775, 831 Plot 727, 776, 832 Setting 728, 776, 832 Point of View 728 Theme 728, 776, 833 Foils 832 Static and Dynamic Characters 832 Climax 832	Learning Word Histories 728 Differentiating Meanings 777 Analyzing Words from Latin Roots 833	Analyzing Methods of Characterization 729 Describing the Setting 777 Expressing an Opinion 833 Comparing the Short Story with the Novel 833
<i>Developing Skills in Critical Thinking</i> 834	Examining the Relationship Between Fiction and Fact 834		
<i>Practice in Reading and Writing</i> 835			Responding to an Interpretation 835

## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Examining the Relationship Between Fiction and Fact 834

## Practice in Reading and Writing

Responding to an Interpretation 835

## INTRODUCING THE UNIT

A possible way to begin the unit is to ask students to name novels they have especially enjoyed. They may indicate preferences for mystery and suspense, adventure, or humor. They may prefer young characters like themselves or colorful personalities of different ages. Capitalize on such preferences by commenting that all these and more may be found in *Great Expectations*.

Forewarn students that this novel contains more characters and a more complicated interweaving of subplots than most books they have read. They will need to read attentively and to review now and then for good understanding. Suggest to students that they take a lesson from readers in Dickens' day, who liked to discuss the earlier chapters with friends while they impatiently waited for the next installment to appear.

Remind students that after they have acquired skill in interpreting the elements of one novel, they can readily transfer this skill to the reading of other novels. Throughout the unit, you will want to encourage students to do further reading. Plan ahead for free reading, panel discussions, and other projects involving novels.

## FOR REINFORCEMENT / EVALUATION

The **Closure** feature in this unit provides suggestions for reinforcing and concluding classroom instruction. In addition to the **Reading Check** feature in the textbook, a *Study Guide* worksheet and a test for each part of the novel are available in the *Teacher's Literature Companion*.

## SUGGESTED TEACHING SCHEDULE

You will probably want to devote at least four weeks to the study and discussion of *Great Expectations*, allowing six or seven class days to the study of each stage of the novel. A fifth week might be devoted to the viewing of a film version of the novel and to the drafting and revising of writing assignments suggested in the **For Extension and Enrichment** features in the *Teacher's Manual*, **Writing About Literature** exercises in the textbook, and the **Ideas for Writing** sections of the **Visual Connections** features in this *Annotated Teacher's Edition*.

## USING THE FEATURES AND ANNOTATIONS

This unit contains all Pupil's Edition pages, slightly reduced in size to create top and side margins. The top margins contain teaching strategies to be used for in-class reference and for planning lessons. The side margins offer information related directly to the text that appears on the reduced pages. These side-margin annotations are designed primarily to be used after students have read the selections and can therefore serve as in-class lecture notes.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### About the Artist

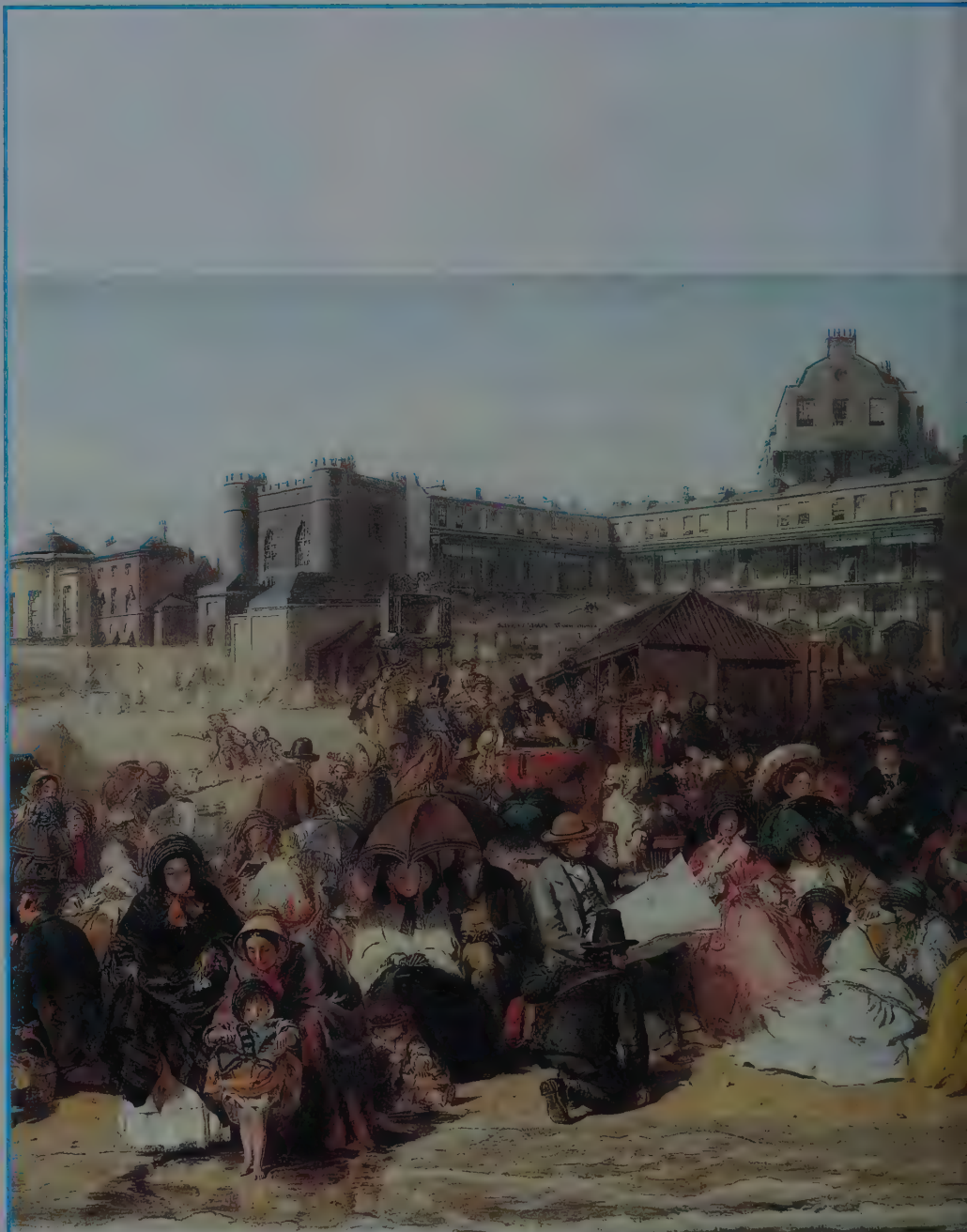
Frith, a narrative painter who created crowded scenes of Victorian life, studied at Sass School of Art and the Royal Academy of Arts in London. He enjoyed a successful and prosperous life as an illustrator, painter, and writer. In 1842 he illustrated Dickens' *Barnaby Rudge* and later painted the portrait of Dickens that appears on p. 667. His most famous works include *The Derby Day* (1858), *The Railway Station* (1862), and *Ramsgate Sands* (1854), shown here, which was purchased by Queen Victoria for Buckingham Palace. The first exhibitions of his work generated such excitement among viewers that the paintings required special railings to protect them.

### About the Artwork

This painting, also known as *Life at the Seaside*, is typical of Frith's works, displaying the high level of skill, animation, and composition for which he was famous. Here, the large group of people is painted in vivid detail, portraying the characteristic modesty of the Victorians. The morality of the day forbade public display of exposed limbs; everyone but the child in the lower left corner is fully clothed.

### Exploring the Subject

This scene portrays an idealized conception of everyday life during the Victorian Era. Few people could wear such clothes or enjoy leisurely days at the beach. Dickens, of course, was more interested in examining the lives of the many poor, who were actually more representative of nineteenth-century British life. As students read *Great Expectations*, ask them to compare Frith's Ramsgate to the London Dickens depicts.



## THE NOVEL

### THE NOVEL

The novel is probably the most popular form of literature perhaps because, unlike the short story, the novel can offer numerous characters, settings, subplots, and themes and can provide readers long-term involvement with the struggles, thoughts, and lives of the characters. In this unit, an abridged version of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* is presented. Although the genre has undergone numerous changes since Dickens' time, the study of *Great Expectations* serves to introduce students to the intricacies and pleasures of reading a novel.

Throughout this unit, students answer questions related to the analysis and interpretation of the various subplots of each of the three stages. The features in this unit help students analyze static and dynamic characters, foils, setting, point of view, humor, suspense, climax, symbolism, and theme. Students expand their vocabularies by learning word histories, differentiating meanings, and analyzing words from Latin roots. Each stage offers opportunities for students to write about literature.



*Ramsgate Sands* (1854) by William Powell Frith (1819–1909). Oil on canvas. Copyright reserved by Gracious Permission of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II



## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Survey student interest in novels. What kinds have they read? Which ones have they enjoyed? Why? What are some of the characteristics of the novels they liked?

## UNIT INTRODUCTION

1

Earliest novel form was the episodic, written in form of letters or journal. First notable work of this type: *Pamela* (1741) by Samuel Richardson.

2

More complex characters have more conflicts, thus leading to more subplots, characters, and themes.

## READING A NOVEL

1. Suspenseful chapter endings, characterizations, and foreshadowing offer clues for prediction.

2. Settings in *Great Expectations* include graveyard, forge, marsh, Satis House, streets of London, and River Thames. These settings, which are used as symbols, also establish mood and foreshadow events.

3. In first chapter, Pip describes his lonely, frightening situation. Reader sees him as poor, sincere creature, alone in world. Later Mrs. Gargery is introduced; her abuse of husband and Pip proves her to be cruel, scolding woman.

4. Main action concerns Pip's quest to fulfill his expectations and learn identity of benefactor. Subplots include relationships with Joe, Estella, Miss Havisham, Herbert, Jaggers, Wemmick, and others.

5. Story told from first-person point of view. Narrator is grown-up Pip telling about his early years.

6. Characterizations, settings, symbols, and resolutions of subplots contribute to the various themes: reality versus illusion, goodness and integrity versus material wealth, true love versus illusory love, and criticism of social and legal systems of Victorian England.

## PRESENTATION

Although the novel and the short story use the same basic elements, such as **plot**, **characterization**, **setting**, **point of view**, and **theme**, the novel is usually more intricate, for it incorporates these elements more extensively. To stress this

difference in the two genres, ask students to consider how a novel they have read is different from a short story they have read. What accounts for the novel's more complex plot and characters? How are the descriptions and settings different?

1

Novels are so familiar to us that we might easily assume that they have been in existence for as long as, for example, the drama, which dates back for centuries. However, the novel is one of the most recent forms of literature. It came into being only about three hundred years ago. Essentially a novel is a long story, often with many characters and more than one story line.

2

The novel and the short story, both of which are classified as fiction, make use of the same basic elements: plot, character, setting, point of view, and theme. Because of its greater length and scope, a novel makes more extensive use of these elements. The plot is frequently more complicated than in a short story, and there may be one or more subplots related to the main action. In a novel there are generally more characters than in a short story, and the characters are portrayed in greater depth. The setting of a novel can reflect the background, ideas, and customs of a historical period, and since the novel is a long work, there is time and space to explore and develop important themes.

## Guidelines for Reading a Novel

1. *Read actively, asking questions and drawing inferences as you read.* Try to predict how some character will act or how some incident will turn out. Try to determine the author's purpose as you read.

2. *Note information that establishes the setting or background of the novel.* Determine the role that setting plays in the novel.

3. *Look for clues that reveal what characters are like: key speeches, important actions, descriptive details.* Discover how characters develop and change as the novel progresses. Try to understand relationships between characters.

4. *Determine what forms the major action of the novel.* Dickens' novels usually contain several subplots in addition to a main plot. As you read, consider how individual episodes are connected to the main plot or subplot(s) of the novel.

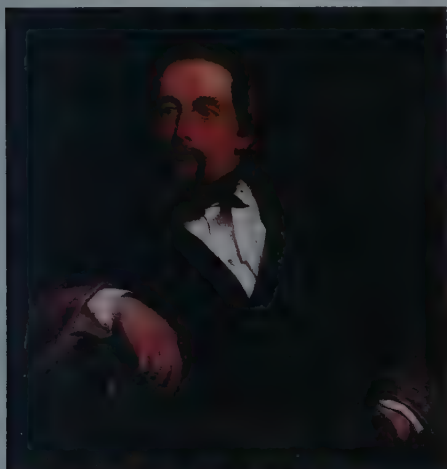
5. *Note the point of view of the novel.* Seek to understand the author's reason for selecting this point of view.

6. *Consider how all the elements of the novel contribute to its theme.* Try to clarify your own understanding of the author's underlying idea by stating this idea in your own words.

\*For additional teaching materials related to this unit, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Mastery Tests 13 and 14 / Analogy Tests 9 and 10 / Composition Test 21 / Reteaching Worksheets 10 and 11

## About the Author

Charles Dickens (1812–1870)



Charles Dickens by William Powell Frith.  
Oil on canvas.

Victoria and Albert Museum

Dickens was born in Portsmouth, England, on February 7, 1812. In 1823 his family moved to London. John Dickens, his father, was arrested for debt. In order to support himself, Charles, who was twelve, went to work in a blacking warehouse, labeling bottles for six shillings a week. This experience was to haunt him for the rest of his life. After his father was released from Marshalsea Debtors' Prison, Dickens was able to leave his job and return to school.

At fifteen Dickens took a job as a law clerk. He taught himself shorthand and began working as a free-lance newspaper reporter. Dick-

ens' first literary work, *Sketches by Boz*, appeared in 1833 ("Boz" was a pseudonym Dickens used to sign his prose sketches). His first novel, *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–1837), like his subsequent novels, appeared in serial form. Shortly after the first installment of the book was published, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth, the daughter of a journalist.

During the next thirty years, Dickens produced an extraordinary series of books: *Oliver Twist* (1837); *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–1839); *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840–1841); *Barnaby Rudge* (1841); *A Christmas Carol* (1843); *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843–1844); *Dombey and Son* (1846–1848); *David Copperfield* (1849–1850); *Bleak House* (1852–1853); *Hard Times* (1854); *Little Dorrit* (1855–1857); *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859); *Great Expectations* (1860–1861); and *Our Mutual Friend* (1864–1865). When he died in 1870, Dickens was working on another novel, *Edwin Drood*.

Dickens' books have been consistently popular for more than a hundred years. Dickens is one of the greatest storytellers who ever lived, and, with the single exception of Shakespeare, no writer of the English-speaking world has had a greater gift for creating sharply individualized characters.

*Great Expectations* is the last of Dickens' great novels. In the book we follow the development of Pip, the central character (and narrator), from childhood to manhood. When we first meet Pip, he is a frightened, sensitive boy who aspires to a world outside his reach. Through a strange twist of fate, he is allowed to fulfill his early dreams, and he learns what kind of life he truly wishes to lead.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The life of Charles John Huffman Dickens is as fascinating as the lives of the characters he created, and Dickens' life is reflected throughout *Great Expectations*.

Although his family was relatively well-to-do, Dickens, like Pip, felt alone and abandoned as a child. When inability to manage money landed Dickens' father in debtor's prison (Newgate Prison in the novel), Dickens was sent to work in his cousin's shoe-polish factory. Dickens' experience there is reflected in his descriptions of the conditions of the lower and working classes in England.

The setting of *Great Expectations*, although not specifically mentioned in the novel, is believed to be near Rochester, England, an area only a mile from where Dickens spent part of his childhood. The realistic details and emotions bring *Great Expectations* to life.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze the **characterization** of Pip and Pip's development in the first stage of the novel. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## PREREADING FOCUS

Before reading the novel, ask students to speculate about the meaning of the title and what they think the novel will be about. Survey students about their ambitions and dreams. Ask what forces inspire their "expectations."

## Great Expectations

After students have read each stage, the margin annotations will assist you in guiding analysis and discussion of **characterization**, **setting**, and **theme**.

## Chapter 1

**1** Point of view. Use of "I" here establishes point of view as **first-person**. Through Pip's eyes, readers share not only his reactions to others but also insights into his own actions.

**2** Marshland at the mouth of the River Thames.

**3** **Setting.** Description of churchyard creates atmosphere of danger and evil, thus anticipating Pip's encounter with convict.

**4** **Characterization.** "Terrible voice" of man matched by his extraordinary physical appearance and his further actions (limped, shivered, glared, growled, seized Pip).

**5** To't means "to do it."

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 728 offers a discussion of word histories and the relationship between terms used in Dickens' day and terms used today.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to describe what they think life was like in Victorian England. Remind them that during this era the poverty-stricken lower classes suffered greatly while the upper classes prospered.

# Great Expectations

## CHARLES DICKENS

### Chapter 1

*In this chapter we meet Pip, who meets a convict in a graveyard.*

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing more explicit **1** than Pip. So I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I gave Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw a picture of either of them.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the **2** river, within twenty miles of the sea. My first vivid impression of things seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon **3** toward evening. At such a time I found out for certain that this bleak place was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and Georgiana, wife of the above, were dead and buried. I knew that the dark flat wilderness beyond was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

**4** A fearful man, all in coarse gray, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied around his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

"Oh! Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded in terror. "Pray don't do it, sir."

"Tell us your name!" said the man.

"Quick!"

"Pip, sir."

"Once more," said the man, staring at me. "Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man. "Pint out the place!"

I pointed to where our village lay, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside down and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. He ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips. "What fat cheeks you ha' got. Darn me if I couldn't eat 'em, and if I han't half a mind **5** to't!"

I held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now lookee herel!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

\*For additional teaching materials related to this stage, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 85 / Selection Test 48 / Reading Check 46 / Vocabulary Tests 31, 32, and 33 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 59



### MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Philip Pirrip (Pip), a seven-year-old orphan being raised by his ill-tempered sister and her kind-hearted husband, encounters a runaway convict in the graveyard where his parents are buried. The convict frightens Pip and demands that Pip

bring him food and a file. After stealing these from his sister and brother-in-law, Pip fears that his theft will be discovered. Soldiers capture the convict. Will he tell where he got the food and the file?

### PRESENTATION

Students should find *Great Expectations* enjoyable. It deals with the conflicts, struggles, and personal relationships of a young boy as he progresses from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. Since students are dealing with the



All movie stills are from a 1946 production of *Great Expectations*.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Exploring the Subject

*Great Expectations* was one of British director David Lean's early movies. In this scene, the escaped convict, played by Finlay Currie, threatens the young Pip. Currie is known for his character portrayals, and the scenes that take place in the graveyard are considered some of the movie's most effective.

#### Ideas for Writing

Ask students to imagine that they are writing a movie script for a modern version of *Great Expectations*. Have them rewrite the scene pictured, imagining that the convict and Pip live in the present day in the students' hometown. Where might this scene take place? How would the convict and Pip be dressed? What would Pip say to the convict?

#### Relating Expression Skills

It may help students to appreciate Pip's dilemma and the terror he experiences if they can see it dramatized. Choose two students to act out the scene pictured, reciting the dialogue from the end of p. 668.

same questions about life that Pip deals with, they should identify easily with him. Nevertheless, students may need much help to understand the language, the life styles, and the attitudes of the nineteenth-century people portrayed in Stage 1. To help students visualize

atmosphere and settings, ask them to discuss the settings in relation to their own experiences, including other books and stories they have read, movies they have seen, and music they have heard. Throughout Stage 1, students might be encouraged to make posters, draw sketches,

paint pictures, or set background music to the various settings of the story. Maps of England and London might be examined to help students trace Pip's travels and experiences.

Students should be reminded of the differences between Pip's time and ours. In Dickens'

6

Graveyard scene is fine example of Dickens' dramatic style. He loved to read to audiences, and his dialogues make excellent oral readings.

7

**Attend** here means "to pay attention," "to understand more fully."

8

**Dialect.** Variant pronunciations (*w = v*), idiosyncratic words, and nonstandard grammar identify convict as member of lower class.

9

**Subplot.** Introduction of second convict who will figure in subsequent events.

10

*In what way does the setting of Chapter 1 make the convict's threats even more frightening for Pip?* Dark graveyard is in itself frightening to young Pip; eerie surroundings add to gruesomeness of threats.

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and I looked over his shoulder.

6 "There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father alonger your mother?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "him too."

"Ha!" he muttered. "Who d'ye live with—supposin' you're kindly let to live, which I han't made up my mind about?"

"My sister, sir—Mrs. Joe Gargery—wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me.

"Now lookee here," he said, "the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know what a file is?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you know what wittles<sup>1</sup> is?"

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out."

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands and said, "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

7

He gave me a tremendous dip and roll. Then he held me by the arms in an upright position and went on in these fearful terms:

"You bring me, tomorrow morning early, 10

8 that file and them wittles to that old Battery<sup>2</sup> over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted, and ate. Now, I ain't alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way of getting at a body, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a-keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it wery hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?"

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery early in the morning.

"Say, Lord strike you dead if you don't!" said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

"Now," he pursued, "you remember what you've undertook, and you remember that young man, and you get home."

He hugged his shuddering body in both his arms and limped toward the low church wall. He got over it, like a man whose legs were numbed and stiff, and then turned round to look for me. I looked all around for the horrible young man, and could see no signs of him. But now I was frightened again, and ran home without stopping.

1. **wittles:** victuals (vīt'lz), food. The convict and other characters pronounce *v* like *w*.

2. **Battery:** a bank of earth on which large guns are mounted.

time, automobiles, televisions, telephones, and radios did not exist. Students should be encouraged to discuss how their lives and attitudes would be changed if modern technology were taken away. Also, inform students that members of Pip's social class generally worked six or seven

days a week, doing hard physical labor without vacation.

Both Dickens' language and the **dialect** of the characters might prove difficult for some students. From time to time, difficult passages, those that are euphemistic, figurative, or archaic

in syntax or diction, might be highlighted during class discussion and "translated" into modern terms. Dickens' use of dialect is important in the portrayal of characters, and students might take turns reading aloud some of the characters' dialogues, such as those of Joe and the convict, and

## Chapter 2

*We now meet Mrs. Joe Gargery, Pip's sister, and Joe Gargery the blacksmith, his brother-in-law.*

My sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than I, and had established a great reputation with herself and the neighbors because she had brought me up "by hand." Knowing her to have a hard and heavy hand, and to be much in the habit of laying it **1** upon her husband as well as upon me, I supposed that Joe Gargery and I were both brought up by hand.

She was not a good-looking woman, my sister; and I had a general impression that she must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand. Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with **2** eyes of a very undecided blue. He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easygoing, foolish, dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness. My sister, Mrs. Joe, with black hair and eyes, was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron, fastened over her figure behind with two loops.

**3** Joe's forge adjoined our house, which was a wooden house, as many of the dwellings in our country were. When I ran home from the churchyard, the forge was shut up, and Joe was sitting alone in the kitchen. Joe and I being fellow sufferers, Joe imparted a confidence to me the moment I raised the latch of the door and peeped in at him.

"Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times looking for you, Pip. And she's out now making it a baker's dozen."

"Is she?"

"Yes, Pip," said Joe, "and what's worse, she's got Tickler with her."

At this dismal intelligence,<sup>1</sup> I twisted the

1. **intelligence:** here, news.

only button on my waistcoat round and round, and looked in great depression at the fire. Tickler was a wax-ended piece of cane, worn smooth by collision with my tickled frame.

"She sot down," said Joe, "and she got up, and she made a grab at Tickler, and she Ram-paged<sup>2</sup> out. That's what she did," said Joe, "she Ram-paged out, Pip."

"Has she been gone long, Joe?" I always treated him as a larger child, and as no more than my equal.

"Well," said Joe, "she's been on the Ram-page, this last spell, about five minutes, Pip. She's a-coming! Get behind the door, old chap."

I took the advice. My sister, Mrs. Joe, throwing the door wide open, and finding an obstruction behind it, immediately divined the cause, and applied Tickler. She concluded by throwing me at Joe, who passed me on into the chimney and quietly fenced me up there with his great leg.

"Where have you been, you young monkey?" said Mrs. Joe, stamping her foot. "Tell me directly what you've been doing to wear me away with fret and fright and worrit, or I'd have you out of that corner if you was fifty Pips, and he was five hundred Gargerys."

"I have only been to the churchyard," said I, from my stool, crying and rubbing myself.

"Churchyard!" repeated my sister. "If it warn't for me you'd have been to the churchyard long ago, and stayed there. Who brought you up by hand?"

"You did," said I.

"And why did I do it, I should like to know?" exclaimed my sister.

I whimpered, "I don't know."

**4** "I don't!" said my sister. "I'd never do it again! I know that. It's bad enough to be a

2. **Ram-paged:** Joe is giving emphasis to the word *ram-page*, to storm about in a fit of anger.

## Chapter 2

1

**Pun.** Dickens uses phrase "by hand" figuratively and literally, creating double meaning that adds humor to Pip's story.

2

**Allusion.** Hercules is appropriate analogy for Joe, for despite Hercules' physical strength, he was weak where women were concerned.

3

**Forge** is furnace where metals are heated.

4

**What do we learn about Mrs. Gargery's character in this episode with Pip?** She is bad-tempered and dominating; she resents having to take care of Pip.



then rewriting them in modern-day language dialects.

Remind students that the novel was originally published in serial form. To keep his readers interested (and buying the magazine) from issue to issue, Dickens ended most chapters with sus-

penseful, "cliff-hanger" episodes. To help students understand the function and construction of these chapter endings, ask them to discuss how some favorite serialized television shows end. Students might compare modern serial-ending tactics to those used by Dickens in the

chapter endings of Stage 1.

Stage 1 is extremely important because it "sets the stage" for the rest of the novel. The introduction of each new character, conflict, and subplot should be noted during class discussions. To help students remember and understand all

5

*Hewed* means "cut."

6

Joe fears that Pip has swallowed bread whole and that he will choke on it.

7

*Bolting* here means "swallowing food without chewing it first."

8

**Characterization.** As an honest, obedient child who has never stolen before, Pip's conscience starts to bother him as he dreads what he must do for convict.

9

*Why didn't Pip think of the household as belonging to Joe also?* Responses will vary. Mrs. Joe is boss of home; she simply "allows" Joe and Pip to live with her.

10

First meeting with convict is Christmas Eve; Pip returns to convict with stolen food and file on Christmas Day.

blacksmith's wife, and him a Gargery, without being your mother."

My thoughts strayed from that question as I looked disconsolately at the fire. For, the fugitive out on the marshes with the ironed leg, the mysterious young man, the file, the food, and the dreadful pledge I was under to commit a larceny on those sheltering premises, rose before me in the avenging coals.

My sister had a way of cutting our bread and butter for us that never varied. First, with her left hand she jammed the loaf hard against her bib. Then she took some butter (not too much) and spread it on the loaf, then sawed a very 5 thick round off the loaf and hewed it into two halves, of which Joe got one, and I the other. Though I was hungry, I dared not eat my slice. I felt that I must have something in reserve for my dreadful acquaintance and his ally, the still more dreadful young man. I resolved to put my hunk of bread and butter down the leg of my trousers.

Joe was about to take a bite when his eye fell on me, and he saw that my bread and butter was gone.

The wonder and consternation with which Joe stopped and stared at me were too evident to escape my sister's observation.

"What's the matter now?" she said.

6 "I say, you know!" muttered Joe, shaking his head at me in a very serious remonstrance. "Pip, old chap! You'll do yourself a mischief. It'll stick somewhere. You can't have chawed it, Pip."

"What's the matter *now*?" repeated my sister, more sharply than before.

"If you can cough any trifle of it up, Pip, I'd recommend you to do it," said Joe, all aghast. "Manners is manners, but still your 'elth's your 'elth."

By this time, my sister was quite desperate, so she pounced on Joe, and, taking him by the two whiskers, knocked his head for a little

while against the wall behind him while I sat in the corner looking guiltily on.

"Now, perhaps you'll mention what's the matter," said my sister, out of breath, "you staring great stuck pig."

Joe looked at her in a helpless way; then took a helpless bite and looked at me again.

7 "Been bolting his food, has he?" cried my sister.

"You know, old chap," said Joe, "I bolted, myself, when I was your age, but I never see your bolting equal yet, Pip."

My sister made a dive at me, and fished me up by the hair, saying nothing more than the awful words, "You come along and be dosed."

Some medical beast had revived tar-water<sup>3</sup> in those days as a fine medicine, and Mrs. Joe always kept a supply of it in the cupboard. The urgency of my case demanded a pint of this mixture, which was poured down my throat while Mrs. Joe held my head under her arm.

8 Conscience is a dreadful thing. The guilty knowledge that I was going to rob Mrs. Joe—I never thought I was going to rob Joe, for I 9 never thought of any of the housekeeping property as his—united to the necessity of always keeping one hand on my bread and butter as I sat, or when I was ordered about the kitchen on any small errand, almost drove me out of my mind.

10 It was Christmas Eve, and I had to stir the pudding for the next day with a copper stick. I tried it with the load upon my leg (and that made me think afresh of the man with the load on *his* leg), and found the tendency of exercise to bring the bread and butter out at my ankle quite unmanageable. Happily I slipped away and deposited that part of my conscience in my garret bedroom.

"Hark!" said I, when I had done my stirring,

3. **tar-water:** a solution of tar and water regarded as a cure-all and also used as a tonic.

the novel's complexities, they might be encouraged to participate in the construction of a bulletin-board time line of Pip's life, marking all the characters he meets, all the places he visits, and all the experiences he has.

and was taking a final warm in the chimney corner before being sent up to bed. "Was that great guns, Joe?"

"Ah," said Joe. "There's another convict off."

"What does that mean, Joe?" said I.

"There was a convict off last night," said Joe, "after sunset gun. And they fired warning of him. And now it appears they're firing warning of another."

"Who's firing?" said I.

"Drat that boy," *interposed* my sister, frowning at me over her work; "what a questioner he is. Ask no questions, and you'll be told no lies."

"Mrs. Joe," said I, "I should like to know—if you wouldn't much mind—where the firing comes from?"

"Lord bless the boy!" exclaimed my sister, as if she didn't quite mean that but rather the contrary. "From the Hulks!"

11 "And please what's Hulks?" said I.

"That's the way with this boy!" exclaimed my sister, pointing me out with her needle and thread, and shaking her head at me. "Answer him one question, and he'll ask you a dozen directly. Hulks are prison ships, right 'cross th' meshes." We always used that name for marshes in our country.

"I wonder who's put into prison ships, and why they're put there?" said I, in a general way, and with quiet desperation.

It was too much for Mrs. Joe, who immediately rose. "I tell you what, young fellow," said she; "I didn't bring you up by hand to badger people's lives out. People are put in the Hulks because they murder, and because they rob, and forge, and do all sorts of bad; and they always begin by asking questions. Now, you get along to bed!"

12 I was never allowed a candle to light me to bed, and, as I went upstairs in the dark, I was in mortal terror of the young man who wanted my heart and liver; I was in mortal terror of

the man with the iron leg; I was in mortal terror of myself, from whom an awful promise had been extracted.

13 As soon as the great black velvet *pall* outside my little window was shot with gray, I got up and went downstairs, every board upon the way, and every crack in every board, calling after me, "Stop thief!" and "Get up, Mrs. Joe!" I had no time to spare. I stole some bread, some rind of cheese, and about half a jar of 14 mincemeat (which I tied up in my pocket handkerchief with my last night's slice), some brandy from a stone bottle, diluting the stone bottle from a jug in the kitchen cupboard, a meat bone with very little on it, and a beautiful round compact pork pie.

There was a door in the kitchen communicating with the forge; I unlocked and unbolted that door and got a file from among Joe's tools. Then I put the fastenings as I had found them, opened the door at which I had entered when I ran home last night, shut it, and ran for the misty marshes.

## Chapter 3

*A second convict appears.*

It was a *rimy* morning and very damp. On every rail and gate, wet lay clammy, and the 1 marsh mist was thick. However fast I went, I couldn't warm my feet, to which the damp cold seemed riveted as the iron was riveted to the leg of the man I was running to meet. I knew my way to the Battery, for I had been down there with Joe, and Joe had told me that, when I was apprenticed<sup>1</sup> to him, we would have such

1. **apprenticed:** In former times, apprenticeship was the most common way to learn a trade. A boy (with his parents or guardian) signed a contract, called "indentures," by which he was bound to serve a master workman without pay for five to seven years. In return for this service, he was taught the workman's trade.

11

Due to strict laws, English prisons were severely overcrowded. To solve problem, England passed Hulks Act of 1776. Old, rotting warships were anchored off the mouth of River Thames and other naval ports and were filled with prisoners. Security became major problem, and typhus spread on hulks. Villagers feared typhus epidemic would reach land.

12

*Why was Pip not allowed a candle to light his way to bed?* Answers will vary. Mrs. Joe may have been conserving supplies, may have been afraid of boy starting a fire, may have felt giving boy candle would be pampering him.

13

**Connotation.** Approaching dawn is described with words *pall*, *gray*, that serve to emphasize Pip's connection to the cemetery and convict.

14

*Why would Mrs. Joe have mincemeat, brandy, and a beautiful pork pie in the kitchen?* She prepared these for Christmas dinner.

## Chapter 3

1

**Simile.** Implication of this comparison is that cold is shackling and painful like leg irons.

2

**Plot.** Pip inadvertently runs into second convict, whom he believes to be first convict's "young man."

3

"I'm much of your opinion" means "I agree."

4

**Imp** is "little devil" or "mischievous child."

5

Pip's pity for convict reveals his sensitive nature, while his boldness of speech reveals his courage and honest desire to be helpful.

6

**Characterization.** Convict becomes warmer, kinder to Pip. Calls him "my boy" and seems to genuinely appreciate Pip's help.

7

It is evident from convict's "gruff laugh" that he made up story about young man to intimidate Pip.

larks<sup>2</sup> there! I had just crossed a ditch which I knew to be very near the Battery, and had just scrambled up the mound beyond, when I saw the man sitting before me. His back was toward me, and he had his arms folded and was nodding forward, heavy with sleep, so I went forward softly and touched him on the shoulder.

2 He instantly jumped up, and it was not the same man, but another man!

And yet this man was dressed in coarse gray, too, and had a great iron on his leg, and was lame, and hoarse, and cold, and everything that the other man was except that he had not the same face, and had a flat, broad-brimmed, low-crowned felt hat on. He swore an oath at me and then he ran into the mist, stumbling twice as he went.

"It's the young man!" I thought, feeling my heart shoot as I identified him. I dare say I should have felt a pain in my liver, too, if I had known where it was.

I was soon at the Battery, and there was the right man—hugging himself and limping to and fro, as if he had never all night left off hugging and limping—waiting for me. He was awfully cold, to be sure. His eyes looked awfully hungry, too. He did not turn me upside down this time, but left me right side upward while I opened the bundle and emptied my pockets.

"What's in the bottle, boy?" said he.

"Brandy," said I.

He was already handing mincemeat down his throat in the most curious manner—more like a man who was putting it away somewhere in a violent hurry, than a man who was eating it—but he left off to take some of the liquor. He shivered all the while so violently that it was quite as much as he could do to keep the neck of the bottle between his teeth without biting it off.

"I think you have got the ague,"<sup>3</sup> said I.

3 "I'm much of your opinion, boy," said he.

"It's bad about here," I told him. "You've been lying out on the meshes."

"I'll eat my breakfast afore they're the death of me," said he. "I'd do that if I was going to be strung up to that there gallows over there, directly arterward. I'll beat the shivers so far, I'll bet you."

He was gobbling mincemeat, meat bone, bread, cheese, and pork pie, all at once; staring distrustfully while he did so at the mist all around us, and often stopping to listen. Some real or fancied sound, some clink upon the river or breathing of beast upon the marsh, now gave him a start, and he said, suddenly:

4 "You're not a deceiving imp? You brought no one with you?"

"No, sir! No!"

"Well," said he, "I believe you. You'd be but a fierce young hound indeed, if at your time of life you could help to hunt a wretched warmint, hunted as near death as this poor wretched warmint is!"

Something clicked in his throat as if he had works in him like a clock, and was going to strike. And he smeared his ragged rough sleeve over his eyes.

Pitying his desolation, and watching him as he gradually settled down upon the pie, I made bold to say, "I am glad you enjoy it."

6 "Thankee, my boy. I do."

"I am afraid you won't leave any of it for him," said I, timidly. "There's no more to be got where that came from."

"Leave any for him? Who's him?" said my friend, stopping in his crunching of piecrust.

"The young man that you spoke of. That was hid with you."

7 "Oh, ah!" he returned, with something like a gruff laugh. "Him? Yes, Yes! *He* don't want no wittles."

2. larks: fun.

3. ague (á'gyōō): chills and fever.



"I thought he looked as if he did," said I.  
8 The man stopped eating and regarded me with the keenest scrutiny and the greatest surprise.

"Looked? When?"

"Just now."

"Where?"

"Yonder," said I, pointing: "over there, where I found him nodding asleep, and thought it was you."

He held me by the collar and stared at me so that I began to think his first idea about cutting my throat had revived.

"Dressed like you, you know, only with a hat," I explained, trembling; "and—and—" I was very anxious to put this delicately—"and with—the same reason for wanting to borrow a file. Didn't you hear the cannon last night?"

"When a man's alone on these flats, with a light head and a light stomach, perishing of cold and want, he hears nothin' all night but guns firing and voices calling. But this man—did you notice anything in him?"

"He had a badly bruised face," said I.

"Not here?" exclaimed the man, striking his left cheek.

"Yes, there!"

"Where is he?" He crammed what little food was left into the breast of his gray jacket. "Show me the way he went. I'll pull him down, like a  
9 bloodhound. Curse this iron on my sore leg! Give us hold of the file, boy."

He was down on the rank wet grass, filing at his iron like a madman, and not minding me or  
10 minding his own leg, which had an old chafe upon it and was bloody, but which he handled as roughly as if it had no more feeling in it than the file.

I was very much afraid of him again, now that he had worked himself into this fierce hurry, and I was likewise very much afraid of keeping away from home any longer. I told him I must go, but he took no notice, so I

thought the best thing I could do was to slip off. The last I saw of him, his head was bent over his knee and he was working hard at his fetter, muttering impatient imprecations at it  
11 and his leg. The last I heard of him, I stopped in the mist to listen, and the file was still going.

## Chapter 4

*We meet the Christmas dinner guests: Mr. Wopsle, the parish clerk; Mr. and Mrs. Hubble, a wheelwright and his wife; and Mr. Pumblechook, Joe's uncle, a corn merchant.*

1 I fully expected to find a constable in the kitchen, waiting to take me up. But not only was there no constable there, but no discovery had yet been made of the robbery. Mrs. Joe was prodigiously busy in getting the house ready for the festivities of the day.

"And where the deuce ha' *you* been?" was Mrs. Joe's Christmas salutation, when I and my conscience showed ourselves.

2 I said I had been down to hear the carols. "Ah, well!" observed Mrs. Joe. "You might ha' done worse." Joe secretly crossed his two forefingers and exhibited them to me as our token that Mrs. Joe was in a cross temper.

We were to have a superb dinner, consisting of a leg of pickled pork and greens, and a pair of roast stuffed fowls. A handsome mince pie had been made yesterday morning (which accounted for the mincemeat not being missed), and the pudding was already on the boil. My sister, having so much to do, was going to church vicariously; that is to say, Joe and I were going. In his working clothes, Joe was a well-knit, characteristic-looking blacksmith; in his holiday clothes, he was more like a scarecrow in good circumstances than anything else.

8 Convict is surprised to learn that there is another convict hiding in marshes.

9 From the convict's questions it can be inferred that he knows other convict; fact that he wants to track him down implies that he wants to do him harm.

10 That chafe is old implies that convict has worn leg irons before, attesting to his long life as convict.

11 **Suspense.** Tension created by Pip's stopping in mist to listen to distant sound of file is typical of way Dickens used chapter endings to hold reader's interest until next installment.

## Chapter 4

1 **Constable:** British police officer.

2 **Irony.** Carols are part of joyous Christmas festivities, but Pip has really been out on marshes with convict, hardly a joyous or festive occasion. Also ironic that Pip, so concerned about his guilty conscience, continues to deceive.

**3** **Conflict.** Pip's guilt and terror are examples of **internal conflict**. Pip will deal with many such conflicts throughout the novel.

**4** Names of Dickens' characters often fit their personalities; in this case, humorously.

**5** **What does Pip mean when he says that Wopsle "punished the amens"?** Responses will vary. Perhaps that Wopsle said "amen" often and loudly.

**6** **Characterization.** Uncharitable description of Pumblechook reflects his personality as well as Pip's attitude toward him.

**7** **Figurative language.** Guests are not actually poking Pip; phrase refers to verbal chastisement and directives aimed at Pip.

**8** Joe's behavior attests to his affection and concern for Pip.

Nothing that he wore then fitted him or seemed to belong to him. As to me, when I was taken to have a new suit of clothes, the tailor had orders to make them like a kind of reformatory, and on no account to let me have the free use of my limbs. Joe and I going to church, therefore, must have been a moving spectacle for compassionate minds. Yet what I suffered outside was nothing to what I underwent within. The terrors that had assailed me whenever Mrs. Joe had gone near the pantry were only to be equaled by the remorse with which my mind dwelt on what my hands had done.

Mr. Wopsle, the clerk<sup>1</sup> at church, was to dine with us; and Mr. Hubble, the wheelwright, and Mrs. Hubble; and Uncle Pumblechook, who was a well-to-do corn chandler<sup>2</sup> in the nearest town, and drove his own chaise-cart.<sup>3</sup> The dinner hour was half past one. When Joe and I got home, we found the table laid, and Mrs. Joe dressed, and the dinner dressing, and the front door unlocked (it never was at any other time) for the company to enter by, and everything most splendid. And still, not a word of the robbery.

The time came, without bringing with it any relief to my feelings, and the company came. Mr. Wopsle, united to a Roman nose and a large, shining, bald forehead, had a deep voice which he was uncommonly proud of. He punished the *amens* tremendously; and when he gave out the psalm, he looked all round the congregation first, as much as to say, "You have heard our friend overhead; oblige me with your opinion of this style!"

I opened the door to the company, first to Mr. Wopsle, next to Mr. and Mrs. Hubble, and

last of all to Uncle Pumblechook. (I was not allowed to call him "uncle," under the severest penalties.)

**6** "Mrs. Joe," said Uncle Pumblechook—a large, hard-breathing, middle-aged, slow man, with a mouth like a fish, dull staring eyes, and sandy hair standing upright on his head, so that he looked as if he had just been all but choked, and had that moment come to—"I have brought you as the compliments of the season—I have brought you, mum, a bottle of sherry wine—and I have brought you, mum, a bottle of port wine." Every Christmas Day he presented himself, as a profound novelty, with exactly the same words, and carrying the two bottles like dumbbells.

We dined on these occasions in the kitchen, and adjourned, for the nuts and oranges and apples, to the parlor. Among this good company I should have felt myself, even if I hadn't robbed the pantry, in a false position. I should not have minded that if they would only have left me alone. But they wouldn't leave me alone. They seemed to think the opportunity lost if they failed to point the conversation at me, every now and then, and stick the point into me.

It began the moment we sat down to dinner. Mr. Wopsle said grace with theatrical declamation and ended with the very proper aspiration that we might be truly grateful. Upon which my sister fixed me with her eyes and said in a low reproaching voice. "Do you hear that? Be grateful."

"Especially," said Mr. Pumblechook, "be grateful, boy, to them which brought you up by hand."

Joe always aided and comforted me when he could, in some way of his own, and he always did so at dinnertime by giving me gravy, if there were any. There being plenty of gravy today, Joe spooned into my plate, at this point, about half a pint.

1. **clerk:** an official who assists the minister at church services and who teaches in the local school.

2. **corn chandler:** a person who buys and sells corn.

3. **chaise-cart** (shāz-kārt): a two-wheeled, one-horse carriage with a folding top.

"He was a world of trouble to you, ma'am," said Mrs. Hubble, commiserating my sister.

"Trouble?" echoed my sister. "Trouble?" And then entered on a fearful catalogue of all the illnesses I had been guilty of, and all the acts of sleeplessness I had committed, and all the high places I had tumbled from, and all the low places I had tumbled into, and all the injuries I had done myself, and all the times she had wished me in my grave, and I had contumaciously<sup>4</sup> refused to go there. Everybody looked at me with indignation and abhorrence.

9 "Have a little brandy, uncle," said my sister.

O Heavens, it had come at last! He would find it was weak, he would say it was weak, and I was lost! I held tight to the leg of the table with both hands and awaited my fate.

My sister went for the stone bottle, came back with the stone bottle, and poured his brandy out; no one else taking any. The wretched man trifled with his glass—took it up, looked at it through the light, put it down—prolonged my misery. All this time Mrs. Joe and Joe were briskly clearing the table for the pie and pudding.

I couldn't keep my eyes off him. I saw the miserable creature finger his glass playfully, take it up, smile, throw his head back, and  
10 drink the brandy off. Instantly, the company was seized with unspeakable consternation, owing to his springing to his feet, turning round several times in an appalling, spasmodic whooping-cough dance, and rushing out at the door; he then became visible through the window, making the most hideous faces and apparently out of his mind.

I held on tight, while Mrs. Joe and Joe ran to him. I didn't know how I had done it, but I had no doubt I had murdered him somehow. In

4. contumaciously (kŏn'tŭō-mā'shās-lē): stubbornly, disobediently.

my dreadful situation, it was a relief when he was brought back, and surveying the company all round as if *they* had disagreed with him, sank down into his chair with the one significant gasp, "Tar!"

I had filled up the bottle from the tar-water jug!

"Tar!" cried my sister, in amazement. "Why, how ever could tar come there?"

But Uncle Pumblechook, who was omnipotent in that kitchen, wouldn't hear the word, wouldn't hear of the subject, imperiously waved it all away with his hand, and asked for hot gin-and-water. My sister, who had begun  
11 to be alarmingly meditative, had to employ herself actively in getting the gin, the hot water, the sugar, and the lemon peel, and mixing them. For the time at least, I was saved. I still held on to the leg of the table, but clutched it now with the fervor of gratitude.

By degrees, I became calm enough to release my grasp and partake of pudding. Mr. Pumblechook partook of pudding. All partook of pudding. I began to think I should get over the day, when my sister said to Joe, "Clean plates—cold."

I clutched the leg of the table again immediately. I foresaw what was coming, and I felt that this time I really was gone.

"You must taste," said my sister, addressing the guests with her best grace, "you must taste, to finish with, a pie; a savory pork pie."

My sister went out to get it. I heard her steps proceed to the pantry. I saw Mr. Pumblechook balance his knife. I heard Joe say, "You shall have some, Pip." I felt that I could bear no more, and that I must run away. I released the leg of the table and ran for my life.

13 But I ran no farther than the house door, for there I ran head foremost into a party of soldiers with their muskets, one of whom held out a pair of handcuffs to me, saying: "Here you are, look sharp, come on!"

9

**Suspense.** Dickens creates tension with numerous details that alarm Pip; Pumblechook's ritualistic drinking of brandy prolongs Pip's anxiety over being discovered, thereby creating suspense for reader.

10

Description of Pumblechook's reaction to watered-down brandy is comical; his gyrations and facial expressions imply overreaction to situation. Effect of humor heightened as passage follows tense, suspenseful scene.

11

Mrs. Joe is wondering how tar got into brandy; "meditative" look on her face makes Pip fearful she will know that he adulterated brandy.

12

**What does Pip think is coming? What does this line imply about Pip's state of mind?** He anticipates sister's discovering that pork pie is missing and that he is guilty. Pip is extremely anxious due to inner conflict, fear of his sister, and secret aid to convict.

13

**Suspense.** Again chapter end is typical of "cliff-hanger" that maintains reader's curiosity until next installment. Reader is led to believe soldiers have come to arrest Pip.



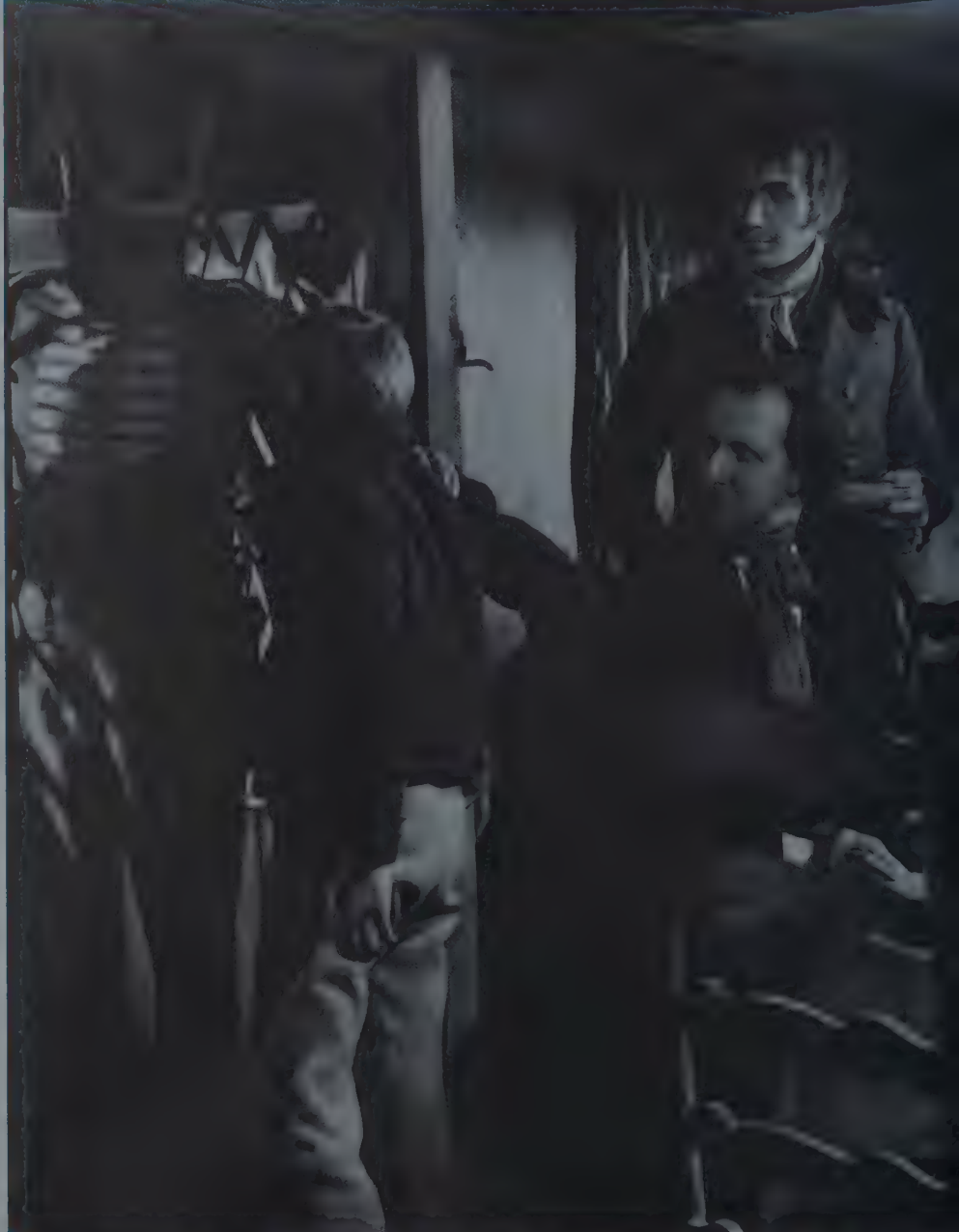
### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Ideas for Writing

At the close of Chapter 4, the reader is well aware of what Pip is thinking but knows nothing about the other characters' thoughts. Ask students to identify each of the characters at the table, based on the physical descriptions in the novel. Then ask students to write brief internal monologues for each character, based on facial expressions and characterizations from the film. The monologues should reveal the characters' inner thoughts.

#### Exploring the Subject

The Christmas dinner is a tradition throughout the world and probably is derived from end-of-year celebrations of peoples in ancient Europe. The dinner planned by Mrs. Joe is much in keeping with the traditional English Christmas dinner. Many Christmas customs popular today were spread in Europe during the 1800s. Dickens himself helped popularize the traditional Christmas dinner through his novel *A Christmas Carol*, 1843. The Cratchit family's Christmas dinner provides important scenes in that novel, one of five so-called Dickens "Christmas books."





## Chapter 5

*The sergeant finds the two convicts.*

The apparition of a file of soldiers ringing down the butt ends of their loaded muskets on our doorstep caused the dinner party to rise from table in confusion, and caused Mrs. Joe, reentering the kitchen empty-handed, to stop short and stare in her wondering lament of "Gracious goodness, gracious me, what's gone—with the—pie!"

The sergeant and I were in the kitchen when Mrs. Joe stood staring. It was the sergeant who had spoken to me, and he was now looking round at the company, with his handcuffs invitingly extended toward them in his right hand, and his left on my shoulder.

"Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen," said the sergeant, "but I want the blacksmith. You see, blacksmith," said the sergeant, who had by this **1** time picked out Joe with his eye, "we have had an accident with these, and I find the lock of one of 'em goes wrong. As they are wanted for immediate service, will you throw your eye over them?"

Joe threw his eye over them and pronounced that the job would necessitate the lighting of his forge fire, and would take nearer two hours than one. "Will it? Then will you set about it at once, blacksmith?" said the **2** offhand sergeant, "as it's on His Majesty's service." With that he called to his men, who came trooping into the kitchen one after another and piled their arms in a corner.

I was in an agony of apprehension. But, beginning to perceive that the handcuffs were not for me, and that the military had so far got **3** the better of the pie as to put it in the background, I collected a little more of my scattered wits.

"How far might you call yourselves from the

## Chapter 5

### 1

**Complication.** Readers now know that Pip's convict has not left. Soldiers' need of handcuffs implies that convict will continue to be involved in plot of novel.

### 2

**Setting.** Sergeant's mention of "His Majesty's service" establishes that time is before 1837, the beginning of Queen Victoria's reign.

### 3

**What does Pip mean by "the military had so far got the better of the pie"?** The soldiers' arrival caused Mrs. Joe to turn her attention from missing pie.

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage can be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying specific details. Ask students to read the passage and choose the response that best answers the question: Who lighted the forge fire? A. Joe. (In-

correct detail. Joe gets himself ready but not the fire.) B. The sergeant. (Irrelevant detail. The sergeant is not mentioned in the passage.) C. Mr. Wopsle. (Incorrect detail. He does no more than agree to go with Joe and the soldiers.) D. One of the soldiers. (Correct.)

4

**What is the sergeant's plan for capturing the convicts?** He and his soldiers will trap them in marshes and close in on them.

5

Pip's and Joe's remarks about convicts indicate that both have compassionate personalities.

6

**Setting.** Cold sleet at dusk contrasts sharply with warm firesides.

7

**Why does Pip dread seeing the convict?** He is afraid that convict will think Pip betrayed him.

8

**Characterization.** Joe shows strength and love as he carries Pip on his back and keeps up with soldiers.

marshes, hereabouts? Not above a mile, I reckon?"

"Just a mile," said Mrs. Joe.

4 "That'll do. We begin to close in upon 'em about dusk. That'll do."

"Convicts, sergeant?" asked Mr. Wopsle, in a matter-of-course way.

"Aye!" returned the sergeant. "Two. They're pretty well known to be out on the marshes still, and they won't try to get clear of 'em before dusk. Anybody here seen anything of any such game?"

Everybody, myself excepted, said no, with confidence. Nobody thought of me.

"Well," said the sergeant, "they'll find themselves trapped in a circle. Now, blacksmith! If you're ready, His Majesty the King is."

► Joe had got his coat and waistcoat and cravat<sup>1</sup> off, and his leather apron on, and passed into the forge. One of the soldiers opened its wooden windows, another lighted the fire, another turned to at the bellows, the rest stood round the blaze, which was soon roaring. Then Joe began to hammer and clink, hammer and clink, and we all looked on.

At last Joe's job was done, and the ringing and roaring stopped. As Joe got on his coat, he mustered courage to propose that some of us should go down with the soldiers and see what came of the hunt. Mr. Wopsle said he would go, if Joe would. Joe said he was agreeable and would take me. ◀

The sergeant took a polite leave of the ladies, and his men resumed their muskets and fell in. Mr. Wopsle, Joe, and I received strict charge to keep in the rear and to speak no word after we reached the marshes. When we were all out in the raw air and were steadily moving toward our business, I treasonably  
5 whispered to Joe, "I hope, Joe, we shan't find them." And Joe whispered to me, "I'd give a

shilling if they had cut and run, Pip."

6 We were joined by no stragglers from the village, for the weather was cold and threatening, the way dreary, the footing bad, darkness coming on, and the people had good fires indoors, and were keeping the day.<sup>2</sup> We struck out on the open marshes, through the gate at the side of the churchyard. A bitter sleet came rattling against us here on the east wind, and Joe took me on his back.

Now that we were out upon the dismal wilderness where they little thought I had been within eight or nine hours, and had seen both men hiding, I considered for the first time, with great dread, if we should come upon them, would my particular convict suppose that it was I who had brought the soldiers there? He had asked me if I was a deceiving imp, and he said I should be a fierce young hound if I joined the hunt against him. Would he believe that I was both imp and hound in treacherous earnest, and had betrayed him?

It was of no use asking this question now.

8 There I was, on Joe's back, and there was Joe beneath me, charging at the ditches like a hunter. The soldiers were in front of us, extending into a pretty wide line with an interval between man and man.

With my heart thumping like a blacksmith at Joe's broad shoulder, I looked all about for any sign of the convicts. I could see none, I could hear none. The soldiers were moving on in the direction of the old Battery, and we were moving on a little way behind them, when, all of a sudden, we all stopped. For there had reached us, on the wings of the wind and rain, a long shout. It was repeated. The sergeant, a decisive man, ordered that the sound should not be answered, but that the course should be changed, and that his men should make toward it "at the double."

1. cravat (krə-văt): necktie.

2. keeping the day: observing Christmas Day.



It was a run indeed now. Down banks and up banks, and over gates, and splashing into dikes, and breaking among coarse rushes, no man cared where he went. As we came nearer to the shouting, it became more and more apparent that it was made by more than one voice. After a while, we could hear one voice calling "Murder!" and another voice, "Convicts! Runaways! Guard! This way for the runaway convicts!" Then both voices would seem to be stifled in a struggle, and then would break out again. And when it had come to this, the soldiers ran like deer, and Joe too.

The sergeant ran in first, and two of his men ran in close upon him. Their pieces<sup>3</sup> were cocked and leveled when we all ran in.

"Here are both men!" panted the sergeant, struggling at the bottom of a ditch. "Surrender, you two! and confound you for two wild beasts! Come asunder!"

10 Water was splashing, and mud was flying, and oaths were being sworn, and blows were being struck, when some more men went down into the ditch to help the sergeant, and dragged out, separately, my convict and the other one. Both were bleeding and panting and execrating and struggling; but of course I knew them both directly.

11 "Mind," said my convict, wiping blood from his face with his ragged sleeves, and shaking torn hair from his fingers, "I took him! I give him up to you! Mind that!"

"It's not much to be particular about," said the sergeant. "It'll do you small good, my man, being in the same plight yourself. Handcuffs there!"

"I don't expect it to do me any good. I don't want it to do me more good than it does now," said my convict, with a greedy laugh. "I took him. He knows it. That's enough for me."

The other convict, in addition to the old

bruised left side of his face, seemed to be bruised and torn all over. He could not so much as get his breath to speak, until they were both separately handcuffed, but leaned upon a soldier to keep himself from falling.

"Take notice, guard—he tried to murder me," were his first words.

"Tried to murder him?" said my convict disdainfully. "Try, and not do it? I took him, and giv' him up, that's what I done. I not only prevented him getting off the marshes, but I dragged him here. He's a gentleman if you please, this villain. Now the Hulks has got its gentleman again, through me. Murder him? When I could do worse and drag him back!"

The other one still gasped, "He tried—he tried—to—murder me. Bear—bear witness."

12 "Looke here!" said my convict to the sergeant. "Singlehanded I got clear of the prison ship; I made a dash and I done it. I could ha' got clear of these death-cold flats likewise—look at my leg; you won't find much iron on it—if I hadn't made discovery that he was here. Let him go free? Let him profit by means as I found out? Let him make a tool of me afresh and again? Once more? No, no, no. If I had died at the bottom there," and he made an emphatic swing at the ditch with his manacled hands, "I'd have held to him with that grip, that you should have been safe to find him in my hold."

The other fugitive, who was evidently in extreme horror of his companion, repeated, "He tried to murder me. I should have been a dead man if you had not come up."

13 "He lies!" said my convict, with fierce energy. "He's a liar born, and he'll die a liar. Look at his face: ain't it written there? Let him turn those eyes of his on me. I defy him to do it."

The other looked at the soldiers, and looked about at the marshes and at the sky, but certainly did not look at the speaker.

9 **Conflict.** Animosity between two convicts creates one of many subplots.

10 **Parallelism.** Dickens employs parallel structure to convey sense that actions occur simultaneously.

11 **Mind:** take notice.

12 **According to Pip's convict, he has traded his own freedom to return the second convict to prison. Why?** Pip's convict says "gentleman" has profitted by using him as tool and calls him "a liar born." He obviously hates the other convict.

13 **Which of the convicts should be believed?** Pip's convict's story is obviously untrue; reader knows that he escaped first since shot announcing escape of second convict was fired after his encounter with Pip. If he had escaped first, he could not have been chasing second convict.

3. pieces: muskets.

**14**  
**Description.** Vivid description of nervous, frightened convict.

**15**  
**Parley** comes from French word *parler*, meaning "to speak."

**16**  
**Does Pip's convict seem angry at Pip? What could be the significance of his "attentive" look?** Responses will vary. Most will probably say convict does not seem angry. **Tone** of passage is calm and reassuring; "attentive" implies that convict is being observant and thoughtful of Pip.

**17**  
**Spent** here means "tired," "exhausted."

**18**  
Meaning "it may prevent others being blamed for a crime I committed."

**19**  
**Why does the convict confess to taking food from blacksmith's house?** He is trying to protect Pip from being accused of theft.

"Do you see him?" pursued my convict. "Do you see what a villain he is? Do you see those groveling and wandering eyes? That's how he looked when we were tried together. He never looked at me."

The other, turning his eyes restlessly about him far and near, did at last turn them for a moment on the speaker, with the words, "You are not much to look at," and with a half-taunting glance at the bound hands. At that point, my convict became so frantically exasperated that he would have rushed upon him but for the interposition of the soldiers. "Didn't I tell you," said the other convict then, "that he would murder me, if he could?" And anyone could see that he shook with fear, and that there broke out upon his lips curious white flakes, like thin snow.

"Enough of this parley," said the sergeant. "Light those torches."

As one of the soldiers, who carried a basket, went down on his knee to open it, my convict looked round him for the first time and saw me. I had alighted from Joe's back on the brink of the ditch when we came up, and had not moved since. I looked at him eagerly when he looked at me, and slightly moved my hands and shook my head. I had been waiting for him to see me, that I might try to assure him of my innocence. He gave me a look that I did not understand, and it all passed in a moment. But if he had looked at me for an hour or for a day, I could not have remembered his face ever afterwards, as having been more attentive.

The soldier with the basket soon lighted three or four torches. Before we departed from that spot, four soldiers, standing in a ring, fired twice into the air. Presently we saw other torches kindled at some distance behind us, and others on the marshes on the opposite bank of the river. "All right," said the sergeant. "March."

We had not gone far when three cannon

were fired ahead of us with a sound that seemed to burst something inside my ear. "You are expected on board," said the sergeant to my convict. "They know you are coming. Don't straggle, my man. Close up here."

The two were kept apart, and each walked surrounded by a separate guard. I had hold of Joe's hand now, and Joe carried one of the torches. Mr. Wopsle had been for going back, but Joe was resolved to see it out, so we went on with the party. The two prisoners limped along in the midst of the muskets. We could not go fast, because of their lameness; and they were so spent, that two or three times we had to halt while they rested.

After an hour or so, we came to a rough wooden hut and a landing place. Then we went into the hut, where there was a smell of tobacco and whitewash, and a bright fire, and a lamp.

My convict never looked at me, except that once. While we stood in the hut, he turned to the sergeant and remarked:

"I wish to say something respecting this escape. It may prevent some persons laying under suspicion longer me."

"You can say what you like," returned the sergeant, standing coolly looking at him with his arms folded, "but you have no call to say it here. You'll have opportunity enough to say about it, and hear about it, before it's done with, you know."

"I know, but this is another matter. A man can't starve; at least I can't. I took some wittles, up at the village over yonder."

"You mean stole," said the sergeant.

"And I'll tell you where from. From the blacksmith's."

"Halloa!" said the sergeant, staring at Joe.

"Halloa, Pip!" said Joe, staring at me.

"It was some broken wittles—that's what it was—and a dram of liquor, and a pie."

"Have you happened to miss such an article

as a pie, blacksmith?" asked the sergeant confidentially.

"My wife did, at the very moment when you came in. Don't you know, Pip?"

"So," said my convict, turning his eyes on Joe in a moody manner, and without the least glance at me; "so you're the blacksmith, are you? Then I'm sorry to say, I've eat your pie."

"God knows you're welcome to it—so far as it was ever mine," returned Joe, with a saving remembrance of Mrs. Joe. "We don't know what you have done, but we wouldn't have you starved to death for it, poor miserable fellow creature. Would us, Pip?"

21 The something that I had noticed before clicked in the man's throat again, and he turned his back. The boat had returned, and his guard were ready, so we followed him to the landing place, and saw him put into the boat, which was rowed by a crew of convicts like himself. No one seemed surprised to see him, or interested in seeing him, or glad to see him, or sorry to see him, or spoke a word except that somebody in the boat growled as if to dogs, "Give way, you!" which was the signal for the dip of the oars. By the light of the torches, we saw the black Hulk lying out a little way from the mud of the shore, like a wicked Noah's ark. Cribbed and barred and moored by massive rusty chains, the prison ship seemed in my young eyes to be ironed like the prisoners. We saw the boat go alongside, and we saw him taken up the side and disappear.

22 Then, the ends of the torches were flung hissing into the water, and went out, as if it were all over with him.

I do not recall that I felt any tenderness of conscience in reference to Mrs. Joe, when the fear of being found out was lifted off me. But I loved Joe—perhaps for no better reason in those days than because the dear fellow let me love him—and it was much on my mind that I

23 ought to tell Joe the whole truth. Yet I did not,

and for the reason that I mistrusted that if I did, he would think me worse than I was. The fear of losing Joe's confidence tied up my tongue. In a word, I was too cowardly to do what I knew to be right, as I had been too cowardly to avoid doing what I knew to be wrong.

## Chapter 6

*We meet Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt and Biddy, her granddaughter.*

When I was old enough, I was to be apprenticed to Joe, and until I could assume that dignity I was not to be what Mrs. Joe called 1 "Pompeyed," or (as I render it) pampered. Therefore, I was not only odd boy about the forge, but if any neighbor happened to want an extra boy to frighten birds, or pick up stones, or do any such job, I was favored with the employment. A money box was kept on the kitchen mantel shelf, into which it was publicly made known that all my earnings were dropped, but I had no hope of any personal participation in the treasure.

Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt kept an evening school in the village. She was a ridiculous old woman who used to go to sleep from six to seven every evening, in the society of youth who paid twopence<sup>1</sup> per week each for the improving opportunity of seeing her do it. She rented a small cottage, and Mr. Wopsle had the room upstairs, where we students used to overhear him reading aloud in a most dignified and terrific manner, and occasionally bumping on the ceiling. There was a fiction that Mr. Wopsle "examined" the scholars once a quarter. What he did on those occasions was to turn up his cuffs, stick up his hair, and give us Mark

1. **twopence** (tūp'əns): about four cents in American money in Dickens' time.

20

Calling convict "fellow creature" suggests Joe's compassion for all humankind.

21

**Characterization.** When Joe speaks kindly to Pip's convict, Pip hears clicking sound in convict's throat. This odd sound seems to be convict's response to another person's compassion. Pip's convict is interesting mixture of roughness and sensitivity, violence and honor.

22

**Symbolism.** The drowned torches symbolize the end of convict's brief freedom; "as if it were all over with him."

23

Pip's relationship with and attitude toward Joe are important. In later pursuit of his expectations, Pip will violate this relationship.

## Chapter 6

1

"Pompeyed," Mrs. Joe's humorous corruption of the word *pampered*, is capitalized because it sounds like name of Roman general and the name of an ancient city. The city was destroyed by a volcano. Her usage is comic in that Pip is far from being a pampered child.



2 In Pip's time, anyone could enter teaching profession, regardless of experience or education.

3 **Characterization.** Biddy compensates for grandmother's inadequacies as teacher and as shopkeeper. A neglected orphan, but bright and enterprising, Biddy becomes major character in novel.

4 Pip is now eight years old.

5 My dear Joe,  
I hope you are right well. I hope I shall soon be able to teach you, Joe, and then we shall be so glad, and when I am apprenticed to you, Joe, what larks and believe me!  
Affectionately yours, Pip.

6 Pip's spelling in letter to Joe indicates pronunciation in his time and place: "ope" for *hope*, "habell" for *able*, "tedge" for *teach*, "shorl" for *shall*, "prengtd" for *apprenticed*, and "wot" for *what*.

7 Pip, realizing Joe cannot read, sees a way to reciprocate Joe's love by teaching him.

Antony's oration over the body of Caesar.<sup>2</sup>

2 Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt, besides keeping this educational institution, kept—in the same room—a little general shop. She had no idea what stock she had, or what the price of anything in it was; but there was a little greasy memorandum book kept in a drawer, which served as a catalogue of prices, and by this oracle Biddy arranged all the shop transactions. Biddy was Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's granddaughter. She was an orphan like myself; like me, too, had been brought up by hand. Her hair always wanted brushing, her hands always wanted washing, and her shoes always wanted mending and pulling up at heel.

More by the help of Biddy than of Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt, I struggled through the alphabet as if it had been a bramblebush, getting considerably worried and scratched by every letter. After that, I fell among those thieves, the nine figures,<sup>3</sup> who seemed every evening to do something new to disguise themselves and baffle recognition. But at last I began, in a groping way, to read, write, and cipher,<sup>4</sup> on the very smallest scale.

One night, I was sitting in the chimney corner with my slate, expending great efforts on the production of a letter to Joe. I think it must have been a full year after our hunt upon the marshes, for it was a long time after, and it was winter and a hard frost. With an alphabet on the hearth at my feet for reference, I contrived in an hour or two to print and smear this epistle:

5 MI DEER JO i OPE U R KRWRITE WELL i OPE i  
SHAL SON B HABELL 4 2 TEEDGE U JO AN  
THEN WE SHORL B SO GLODD AN WEN i M  
PRENGTD 2 U JO WOT LARX AN BLEVE ME INF  
6 XN PIP.

2. **Mark . . . Caesar:** a famous speech from William Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar*.

3. **the nine figures:** the numbers one through nine.

4. **cipher:** to do arithmetic.

There was no necessity for my communicating with Joe by letter, inasmuch as he sat beside me and we were alone. But I delivered this written communication (slate and all) with my own hand, and Joe received it as a miracle of erudition.

"I say, Pip, old chap!" cried Joe, opening his blue eyes wide. "What a scholar you are! Ain't you?"

"I should like to be," said I, glancing at the slate as he held it, with a misgiving that the writing was rather hilly.

"Why, here's a J," said Joe, "and a O equal to anythink! Here's a J and a O, Pip, and a J-O, Joe."

I had never heard Joe read aloud to any greater extent than this monosyllable, and I had observed at church last Sunday, when I accidentally held our prayer book upside down, that it seemed to suit his convenience quite as well as if it had been all right. Wishing to embrace the present occasion of finding out whether, in teaching Joe, I should have to begin quite at the beginning, I said, "Ah! But read the rest, Joe."

"The rest, eh, Pip?" said Joe, looking at it with a slowly searching eye. "One, two, three. Why, here's three J's, and three O's, and three J-O, Joe's, in it, Pip!"

I leaned over Joe, and, with the aid of my forefinger, read him the whole letter.

"Astonishing!" said Joe, when I had finished. "You *are* a scholar."

"How do you spell Gargery, Joe?" I asked.

"I don't spell it at all," said Joe.

"But supposing you did?"

"It *can't* be supposed," said Joe. "Tho' I'm uncommon fond of reading, too."

"Are you, Joe?"

"Oncommon. Give me," said Joe, "a good book, or a good newspaper, and sit me down afore a good fire, and I ask no better. Lord!" he continued, after rubbing his knees a little,

"when you *do* come to a J and a O, and says you, 'Here, at last, is a J-O, Joe,' how interesting reading is!"

I derived from this last, that Joe's education, like steam, was yet in its infancy. Pursuing the subject, I inquired:

"Didn't you ever go to school, Joe, when you were as little as me?"

"No, Pip."

"Why didn't you ever go to school, Joe, when you were as little as me?"

"Well, Pip," said Joe, taking up the poker, and settling himself to his usual occupation, when he was thoughtful, of slowly raking the fire between the lower bars, "I'll tell you. My father, Pip, he were given to drink, and when he were overtook with drink, he hammered away at my mother most onmerciful. My mother and me we ran away from my father several times; and then my mother she'd go out to work, and she'd say, 'Joe,' she'd say, 'now, please God, you shall have some schooling, child,' and she'd put me to school. But my father were that good in his heart that he couldn't a-bear to be without us. So, he took us home and hammered us. Which, you see, Pip" said Joe, "were a drawback on my learning."

"Certainly, poor Joe!"

"Though mind you, Pip," said Joe, "rendering unto all their doo, and maintaining equal justice betwixt man and man, my father were that good in his heart, don't you see?"

I didn't see; but I didn't say so.

"'Consequence, my father didn't make objections to my going to work; so I went to work at my present calling, and I worked tolerable hard, I assure *you*, Pip. In time I were able to keep him, and I kep him till he went off in a purple leptic fit.<sup>5</sup> My mother, she were in poor 'elth, and quite broke. She waren't long of fol-

9 lowing, poor soul, and her share of peace come round at last."

Joe's blue eyes turned a little watery. "It were but lonesome then," said Joe, "living here alone, and I got acquainted with your sister. Now, Pip," Joe looked firmly at me, as if he knew I was not going to agree with him, "your sister is a fine figure of a woman."

I could not help looking at the fire, in an obvious state of doubt.

10 "Whatever family opinions, or whatever the world's opinions, on that subject may be, Pip, your sister is," Joe tapped the top bar with the poker after every word following, "a—fine—figure—of—a—woman!"

I could think of nothing better to say than "I am glad you think so, Joe."

"So am I," returned Joe. "When I offered to your sister to keep company, and to be asked in church, at such times as she was willing and ready to come to the forge, I said to her, 'And bring the poor little child. God bless the poor little child,' I said to your sister, 'there's room 11 for *him* at the forge!'"

I broke out crying and hugged Joe round the neck, who dropped the poker to hug me, and to say, "Ever the best of friends; ain't us, Pip? Don't cry, old chap!"

When this little interruption was over, Joe resumed:

"Well, you see, Pip, and here we are! Now, when you take me in hand in my learning, Pip (and I tell you beforehand I am awful dull, most awful dull), Mrs. Joe mustn't see too much of what we're up to. It must be done, as 12 I may say, on the sly. I'll tell you why, Pip.

"Your sister is given to government," said Joe. "Which I meantsay the government of you and myself."

"Oh!"

"And she ain't overpartial to having scholars on the premises," Joe continued, "and in pickler would not be overpartial to my

8

Irony. Joe describes his father's motives in terms that are opposite to reality of situation. This verbal irony attests to Joe's good humor in face of bad memory and to his general compassion for humankind.

9

"Share of peace" is euphemism for death.

10

Characterization. That Joe would defend his wife's goodness, as he defended convict and father, is example of Joe's ability to seek good in people.

11

Joe's compassion and charity in light of his own harsh upbringing touches Pip.

12

Is Joe's desire for secrecy good? Responses will vary. Mrs. Joe would not want Joe educated for fear he would rebel against her authority. Joe's desire for secrecy is not out of fear of Mrs. Joe but out of understanding of her flaws.

5. **purple leptic fit:** Joe means an *apoplectic* (ăp'ə-plēk'tīk) fit. *Apoplexy* (ăp'ə-plēk'sē) is a sudden paralysis or loss of consciousness, sometimes called a *stroke*.

13

**Personification.** Joe's remark is amusing; he suggests clock is living thing that has to gather strength to strike chimes.

14

Dickens gives specific details of the domestic scene: Joe's playful remark about the Dutch clock, Mrs. Joe's shopping, Joe's sweeping hearth, and jingling harness on Uncle Pumblechook's mare. The details create pleasant, warm atmosphere.

15

**Foil.** Mrs. Joe's biting sarcasm and derision are in sharp contrast to Joe's gentleness and regard for her. This contrast highlights traits of these characters.

16

**Foreshadowing.** Mention of Miss Havisham's reputation, house, and life style foreshadows her role in Pip's life and important theme of novel: wealth is no substitute for happiness.

being a scholar, for fear as I might rise. Like a sort of rebel, don't you see?"

Young as I was, I believe that I dated a new admiration of Joe from that night. We were equals afterward, as we had been before; but afterward, at quiet times when I sat looking at Joe and thinking about him, I had a new sensation of feeling conscious that I was looking up to Joe in my heart.

13 "However," said Joe, rising to replenish the fire, "here's the Dutch clock a-working himself up to being equal to strike eight of 'em, and she's not home yet!"

Mrs. Joe made occasional trips with Uncle Pumblechook on market days to assist him in buying such household stuffs and goods as required a woman's judgment, Uncle Pumblechook being a bachelor. This was market day, and Mrs. Joe was out on one of these expeditions.

14 Joe made the fire and swept the hearth, and then we went to the door to listen for the chaise-cart. It was a dry, cold night.

"Here comes the mare," said Joe, "ringing like a peal of bells!"

Mrs. Joe was soon landed, and Uncle Pumblechook was soon down too, and we were soon all in the kitchen, carrying so much cold air with us that it seemed to drive all the heat out of the fire.

"Now," said Mrs. Joe, unwrapping herself with haste and excitement, and throwing her bonnet back on her shoulders, where it hung by the strings, "if this boy ain't grateful this night, he never will be!"

I looked as grateful as any boy possibly could who was wholly uninformed why he ought to assume that expression.

"It's only to be hoped," said my sister, "that he won't be Pompeyed. But I have my fears."

"She ain't in that line, mum," said Mr. Pumblechook. "She knows better."

She? I looked at Joe, making the motion with

my lips and eyebrows. "She?" Joe looked at me, making the motion with *his* lips and eyebrows. "She?" My sister catching him in the act, he drew the back of his hand across his nose with his usual conciliatory air on such occasions, and looked at her.

15 "Well?" said my sister, in her snappish way. "What are you staring at? Is the house afire?" "Which some individual," Joe politely hinted, "mentioned she."

"And she is a she, I suppose?" said my sister. "Unless you call Miss Havisham a he. And I doubt if even you'll go so far as that."

"Miss Havisham uptown?" said Joe.

"Is there any Miss Havisham downtown?" returned my sister. "She wants this boy to go and play there. And of course he's going. And he had better play there," said my sister, shaking her head at me as an encouragement to be extremely light and sportive, "or I'll work him."

16 I had heard of Miss Havisham uptown—everybody for miles round had heard of Miss Havisham uptown—as an immensely rich and grim lady who lived in a large and dismal house barricaded against robbers, and who led a life of seclusion.

"Well, to be sure!" said Joe, astounded. "I wonder how she comes to know Pip!"

"Noodle!" cried my sister. "Who said she knew him?"

"Which some individual," Joe again politely hinted, "mentioned that she wanted him to go and play there."

"And couldn't she ask Uncle Pumblechook if he knew of a boy to go and play there? Isn't it just barely possible that Uncle Pumblechook may be a tenant of hers, and that he may sometimes go there to pay his rent? And couldn't she then ask Uncle Pumblechook if he knew of a boy to go and play there? And couldn't Uncle Pumblechook—being always considerate and thoughtful for us, though you may not think it,



Joseph, then mention this boy that I have forever been a willing slave to?"

"Good again!" cried Uncle Pumblechook. "Well put! Good indeed! Now, Joseph, you know the case."

"No, Joseph," said my sister, in a reproachful manner, "you do not yet—though you may not think it—know the case. Uncle Pumblechook, being sensible that this boy's fortune may be made by his going to Miss Havisham's, has offered to take him into town tonight in his own chaise-cart and to keep him tonight and to take him with his own hands to Miss Havisham's tomorrow morning. And Lor-a-mussy<sup>6</sup> me!" cried my sister, casting off her bonnet in sudden desperation, "here I stand talking to mere mooncalfs, with Uncle Pumblechook waiting, and the mare catching cold at the door, and the boy grimed with crock and dirt from the hair of his head to the sole of his foot!"

18 With that she pounced on me, like an eagle on a lamb, and my face was squeezed into wooden bowls in sinks, and my head was put under taps of water butts, and I was soaped, and kneaded, and toweled, and thumped, and harrowed, and rasped, until I really was quite beside myself.

When my ablutions were completed, I was put into clean linen of the stiffest character, and was trussed up in my tightest and fearfulest suit. I was then delivered over to Mr.

19 Pumblechook, who formally received me as if he were the sheriff, and who let off upon me the speech that I knew he had been dying to make all along: "Boy, be forever grateful to all friends, but especially unto them which brought you up by hand!"

"Goodbye, Joe!"

"God bless you, Pip, old chap!"

I had never parted from him before, and what with my feelings and what with soapsuds,

6. **Lor-a-mussy:** Lord have mercy (on).

20 I could at first see no stars from the chaise-cart. But they twinkled out one by one, without throwing any light on the questions why on earth I was going to play at Miss Havisham's, and what on earth I was expected to play at.

## Chapter 7

*We are introduced to Miss Havisham and her ward Estella.*

Mr. Pumblechook's premises in the High Street of the market town were of a peppercorny character, as the premises of a corn chandler and seedsman should be. It was in the early morning after my arrival that I entertained this speculation. On the previous night, I had been sent straight to bed in an attic with a sloping roof, which was so low in the corner where the bedstead was that I calculated the tiles as being within a foot of my eyebrows.

Mr. Pumblechook and I breakfasted at eight o'clock in the parlor behind the shop while his shopman took his mug of tea and hunch of bread and butter on a sack of peas in the front premises. I considered Mr. Pumblechook wretched company. Besides giving me as much crumb as possible in combination with as little butter, and putting a great quantity of warm water in my milk, his conversation consisted of nothing but arithmetic. On my politely bidding him good morning, he said pompously, "Seven times nine, boy?" And how should I be able to answer, dodged in that way, in a strange place, on an empty stomach! I was hungry, but before I had swallowed a morsel, he began a running sum that lasted all through the breakfast. "Seven?" "And four?" "And eight?" "And six?" "And two?" "And ten?" And so on.

I was very glad when ten o'clock came and we started for Miss Havisham's. Within a quar-

17

**Mooncalfs** is an insult meaning "foolish persons." According to old superstition, moon in certain stages causes monstrous births. Mrs. Joe is actually calling Joe and Pip idiots.

18

**Simile.** Mrs. Joe's washing of Pip is effectively compared to eagle's preying upon lamb. Simile adds humor to description of Pip's ordeal.

19

**What might be inferred from Pip's description of Pumblechook's reception of him?** By comparing Pumblechook with sheriff, Pip implies that he is being taken prisoner.

20

**Symbolism.** Dickens uses star imagery often in *Great Expectations*. Stars symbolize wishes, hopes, and uncertain future.

## Chapter 7

1

"Peppercorny" describes pungent smell of shop where all kinds of seeds are bought and sold.

2

**How does Dickens evoke readers' sympathy for Pip in this paragraph?** Dickens shows Pumblechook giving Pip only a morsel of bread and watery milk and drilling Pip on his sums while they eat.

3

**Symbol.** The bars on windows of Miss Havisham's house serve to keep people out, but they also symbolize her self-made prison, for she has locked herself away, living mostly in sad past.

4

**Characterization.** Despite fact that Uncle Pumblechook is her elder, Estella retorts that Miss Havisham does not want to see him. Her behavior reveals her rude nature.

5

**Foreshadowing.** That wind is colder inside gate than outside leads reader to suspect Pip will be treated coldly.

6

Dickens often used actual places and buildings in his writing. Restoration House, an Elizabethan mansion in Rochester, England, was model for Satis House.

7

**Irony.** Name of house and young girl's explanation are ironic. Miss Havisham, owner of house, is far from satisfied with life.

ter of an hour we came to Miss Havisham's house, which was of old brick, and dismal, and had a great many iron bars to it. Some of the windows had been walled up; of those that remained, all the lower were rustily barred. There was a courtyard in front, and that was barred; so we had to wait, after ringing the bell, until someone should come to open it. While we waited at the gate, I saw that at the side of the house there was a large brewery. No brewing was going on in it, and none seemed to have gone on for a long time.

A window was raised, and a clear voice demanded, "What name?" To which my conductor replied, "Pumblechook." The voice returned, "Quite right," and the window was shut again, and a young lady came across the courtyard, with keys in her hand.

"This," said Mr. Pumblechook, "is Pip."

"This is Pip, is it?" returned the young lady, who was very pretty, and seemed very proud. "Come in, Pip."

Mr. Pumblechook was coming in also, when she stopped him with the gate.

"Oh!" she said. "Did you wish to see Miss Havisham?"

"If Miss Havisham wished to see me," returned Mr. Pumblechook, discomfited.

4 "Ah!" said the girl. "But you see she don't."

She said it so finally, that Mr. Pumblechook could not protest. But he eyed me severely—as if I had done anything to him!—and departed with the words reproachfully delivered: "Boy! Let your behavior here be a credit unto them which brought you up by hand!"

—My young conductress locked the gate, and we went across the courtyard. It was paved and clean, but grass was growing in every crevice. The brewery beyond stood open, and all was

5 empty and disused. The cold wind seemed to blow colder there than outside the gate; and it made a shrill noise in howling in and out at the

open sides of the brewery, like the noise of the wind in the rigging of a ship at sea.

"What is the name of this house, miss?"

6 "Its name was Satis; which is Greek, or Latin, or Hebrew, or all three—or all one to me—for enough."

7 "Enough House!" said I. "That's a curious name, miss."

"Yes," she replied, "but it meant more than it said. It meant, when it was given, that whoever had this house, could want nothing else. They must have been easily satisfied in those days, I should think. But don't loiter, boy."

Though she called me "boy" so often, and with a carelessness that was far from complimentary, she was of about my own age. She seemed much older than I, of course, being a girl, and beautiful and self-possessed; and she was as scornful of me as if she had been one-and-twenty, and a queen.

We went into the house by a side door—the great front entrance had two chains across it outside—and the first thing I noticed was that the passages were all dark, and that she had left a candle burning there. She took it up, and we went through more passages and up a staircase, and still it was all dark, and only the candle lighted us.

At last we came to the door of a room, and she said, "Go in."

I answered, more in shyness than politeness, "After you, miss."

To this she returned, "Don't be ridiculous, boy; I am not going in." And scornfully walked away, and—what was worse—took the candle with her.

This was very uncomfortable, and I was half afraid. However, the only thing to be done being to knock at the door, I knocked, and was told from within to enter. I entered, therefore, and found myself in a pretty large room, well lighted with wax candles. No glimpse of daylight was to be seen in it. It was a dressing

room, as I supposed from the furniture. But prominent in it was a draped table with a gilded looking glass, and that I made out at first sight to be a fine lady's dressing table.

In an armchair, with an elbow resting on the table and her head leaning on that hand, sat the strangest lady I have ever seen, or shall ever see.

8 She was dressed in rich materials—satins, and lace, and silks—all of white. Her shoes were white. And she had a long white veil dependent from her hair, and she had bridal flowers in her hair, but her hair was white. Some bright jewels sparkled on her neck and on her hands, and some other jewels lay sparkling on the table. Dresses and half-packed trunks were scattered about. She had not quite finished dressing, for she had but one shoe on—the other was on the table near her hand—her veil was but half arranged, her watch and chain were not put on, and some lace for her bosom lay with those trinkets, and with her handkerchief, and gloves, and some flowers, and a prayer book, all confusedly heaped about the looking glass.

But I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white had lost its luster, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose had shrunk to skin and bone.

"Who is it?" said the lady at the table.

"Pip, ma'am."

"Pip?"

"Mr. Pumblechook's boy, ma'am. Come—to play."

"Come nearer; let me look at you. Come closer."

It was when I stood before her, avoiding her

9 eyes, that I took note of the surrounding objects in detail, and saw that her watch had stopped at twenty minutes to nine, and that a clock in the room had stopped at twenty minutes to nine.

"Look at me," said Miss Havisham. "You are not afraid of a woman who has never seen the sun since you were born?"

10 I regret to state that I was not afraid of telling the enormous lie comprehended in the answer, "No."

"Do you know what I touch here?" she said, laying her hands, one upon the other, on her left side.

"Yes, ma'am."

"What do I touch?"

"Your heart."

"Broken!"

She uttered the word with an eager look, and with strong emphasis, and with a weird smile that had a kind of boast in it.

"I am tired," said Miss Havisham. "I sometimes have sick fancies, and I have a sick fancy that I want to see some play. There, there!" with an impatient movement of the fingers of her right hand, "play, play, play!"

I stood looking at Miss Havisham in what I suppose she took for a stubborn manner, inasmuch as she said, when we had taken a good look at each other:

"Are you sullen and obstinate?"

"No, ma'am, I am very sorry for you, and very sorry I can't play just now. If you complain of me, I shall get into trouble with my sister, so I would do it if I could; but it's so new here, and so strange, and so fine—and melancholy—" I stopped, fearing I might say too much, or had already said it, and we took another look at each other.

Before she spoke again, she turned her eyes from me, and looked at the dress she wore, and at the dressing table, and finally at herself

13 in the looking glass.

8

**Description.** Precise detail describing Miss Havisham brings the character to life and serves to stimulate reader's curiosity.

9

**Foreshadowing.** Clocks stopped at twenty minutes before nine are clue that Miss Havisham lives in the past; reader learns later that this is precise time she was jilted. Time of 9:00 is interesting motif throughout story.

10

Pip is indeed afraid of eccentric Miss Havisham.

11

Miss Havisham's remark makes it clear that she is conscious of her eccentricities.

12

**What does Pip say here that lets us know he is quite perceptive for his age?** He remarks that new surroundings are very "melancholy."

13

**Looking glass:** mirror.



14

While looking in mirror, Miss Havisham thinks of Estella. Estella has been trained by Miss Havisham to "mirror" her cold cruelty.

15

*Why does Pip feel it a "dreadful liberty" to call Estella?* Pip recognizes that although Estella is close to his age, she is considered his superior because of her station in life.

16

**Symbol.** When Pip sees Estella coming down hall, he compares her to a star. Her name, from Latin, means "star." Star symbolizes Pip's aspirations, dreams, and uncertainties and the role Estella is to play in his "expectations."

17

**Conflict.** Estella's attitude toward Pip represents two major conflicts: upper class vs. lower class and Estella vs. Pip. Examination of first leads to a **theme**; development of second creates subplot.

18

"Beggar my neighbor" aptly describes Miss Havisham's and Estella's intentions toward Pip, for both see Pip as inferior and wish to make him feel even more so.

19

**Characterization.** Pip's description of Miss Havisham as "corpse-like" captures not only her physical appearance but also condition of her life; everything in room, including her life, has stopped.

"So new to him," she muttered, "so old to me; so strange to him, so familiar to me; so melancholy to both of us! Call Estella."

As she was still looking at the reflection of herself, I thought she was still talking to herself, and kept quiet.

"Call Estella," she repeated, flashing a look at me. "You can do that. Call Estella. At the door."

To stand in the dark in a mysterious passage of an unknown house, bawling Estella to a scornful young lady neither visible nor responsive, and feeling it a dreadful liberty so to roar out her name, was almost as bad as playing to order. But, she answered at last, and her light came along the dark passage like a star.

Miss Havisham beckoned her to come close, and took up a jewel from the table, and tried its effect against her pretty brown hair. "Your own, one day, my dear, and you will use it well. Let me see you play cards with this boy."

"With this boy! Why, he is a common laboring boy!"

I thought I overheard Miss Havisham answer—only it seemed so unlikely—"Well? You can break his heart."

"What do you play, boy?" asked Estella of me, with the greatest disdain.

"Nothing but beggar my neighbor, miss."

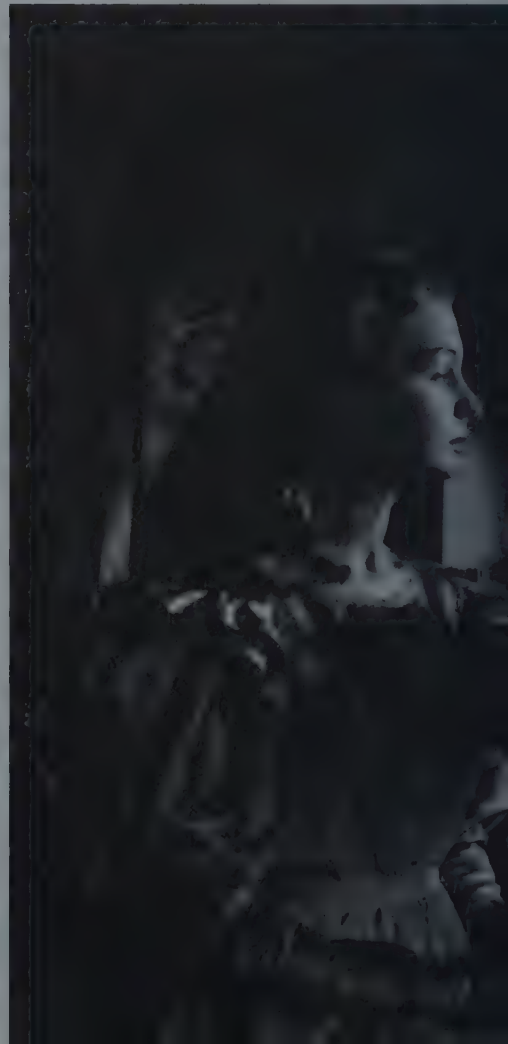
"Beggar him," said Miss Havisham to Estella. So we sat down to cards.

It was then I began to understand that everything in the room had stopped, like the watch and the clock, a long time ago. I noticed that Miss Havisham put down the jewel exactly on the spot from which she had taken it up. As Estella dealt the cards, I glanced at the dressing table again, and saw that the shoe upon it, once white, now yellow, had never been worn. I glanced down at the foot from which the shoe was absent, and saw that the silk stocking on it, once white, now yellow, had been trodden ragged.

Miss Havisham sat, corpselike, as we played at cards.

"He calls the knaves jacks, this boy!" said Estella with disdain, before our first game was out. "And what coarse hands he has! And what thick boots!"

I had never thought of being ashamed of my



**20** hands before; but her contempt for me was so strong that it became infectious, and I caught it.

**21** She won the game, and I dealt. I misdealt, as was only natural when I knew she was lying in wait for me to do wrong; and she denounced me for a stupid, clumsy, laboring boy.

"You say nothing of her," remarked Miss Havisham to me, as she looked on. "She says many hard things of you, yet you say nothing of her. What do you think of her?"

"I don't like to say," I stammered.

"Tell me in my ear," said Miss Havisham, bending down.



**20**

**Figurative language.** Contempt is described as disease which Pip has caught from Estella.

**21**

**Why is it "only natural" for Pip to misdeal under these circumstances?** It is very common to make mistakes when someone is watching, waiting for an error to be made.

### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Ideas for Writing**

Facial expressions and body language can tell us much of what a person is thinking and feeling. After students have studied the photograph on pp. 690–691, ask them to write paragraphs describing what they believe each character in the picture is thinking and feeling. Draw students' attention to way each character is sitting as well as to each character's facial expression.

22

**Characterization.** Pip's comments about Estella reflect his attitude toward her: he recognizes her negative traits as well as her beauty. Pip's description is an accurate portrayal of her character.

23

**Symbol.** Card game is symbol of conflict between Estella and Pip. Also, behavior during game, the game's outcome, and Estella's attitude toward Pip all anticipate "game" of love older Pip and Estella will play, with similar results and with Miss Havisham as approving witness.

24

Evidence of Pip's changing attitude toward himself, his upbringing, and his best friend, Joe. This change is caused by his embarrassment and his growing attraction to the beautiful Estella.

25

Estella not only looks at Pip as if he were "a dog in disgrace," she also treats him as one by giving him his food outdoors as if feeding an animal.

26

**What does Pip mean by "come to myself"? What might be inferred from his behavior?** Estella's approach causes Pip to stop crying. Though Pip is developing shame in his origins, he has enough pride not to show he is wounded.

22 "I think she is very proud," I replied, in a whisper.

"Anything else?"

"I think she is very pretty."

"Anything else?"

"I think she is very insulting." (She was looking at me then with a look of supreme aversion.)

"Anything else?"

"I think I should like to go home."

"And never see her again, though she is so pretty?"

"I am not sure that I shouldn't like to see her again, but I should like to go home now."

23 "You shall go soon," said Miss Havisham aloud. "Play the game out."

I played the game to an end with Estella, and she begged me. She threw the cards down on the table when she had won them all, as if she despised them for having been won of me.

"When shall I have you here again?" said Miss Havisham. "Let me think. Come again after six days. You hear?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Estella, take him down. Let him have something to eat, and let him roam and look about him while he eats. Go, Pip."

I followed the candle down, as I had followed the candle up, and she stood it in the place where we had found it.

"You are to wait here, you boy," said Estella. She disappeared and closed the door.

24 I took the opportunity of being alone to look at my coarse hands and my common boots. They had never troubled me before, but they troubled me now. I determined to ask Joe why he had ever taught me to call those picture cards jacks, which ought to be called knaves. I wished Joe had been rather more genteelly brought up, and than I should have been so too.

She came back, with some bread and meat and a little mug of beer. She put the mug down

on the stones of the yard, and gave me the bread and meat without looking at me, as insolently as if I were a dog in disgrace. I was so humiliated, hurt, spurned, offended, angry, sorry, that tears started to my eyes. The moment they sprang there, the girl looked at me with a quick delight in having been the cause of them. This gave me power to keep them back and to look at her; so she gave a contemptuous toss—but with a sense, I thought, of having made too sure that I was so wounded—and left me.

But, when she was gone, I got behind one of the gates in the brewery lane, and leaned my sleeve against the wall there, and leaned my forehead on it, and cried. As I cried, I kicked the wall, and took a hard twist at my hair, so bitter were my feelings.

I got rid of my injured feelings for the time, by kicking them into the brewery wall, and twisting them out of my hair, and then I smoothed my face with my sleeve, and came from behind the gate. The bread and meat were acceptable, and the beer was warming and tingling.

26 Even with those aids, I might not have come to myself as soon as I did, but that I saw Estella approaching with the keys to let me out. She gave me a triumphant glance in passing me, as if she rejoiced that my hands were so coarse and my boots were so thick, and she opened the gate and stood holding it. I was passing out without looking at her when she touched me with a taunting hand.

"Why don't you cry?"

"Because I don't want to."

"You do," said she. "You have been crying till you are half blind, and you are near crying again now."

She laughed contemptuously, pushed me out, and locked the gate upon me. I went straight to Mr. Pumblechook's, and was immensely relieved to find him not at home. So,



leaving word with the shopman on what day I was wanted at Miss Havisham's again, I set off on the four-mile walk to our forge, pondering, as I went along, on all I had seen, and that I was a common laboring boy; that my hands were coarse; that my boots were thick; that I was much more ignorant than I had considered myself last night; and generally that I was in a low-lived, bad way.

## Chapter 8

*Pip tells some tall tales.*

When I reached home, my sister was very curious to know all about Miss Havisham's, and asked a number of questions. And I soon found myself getting heavily bumped from behind in the nape of the neck and the small of the back, and having my face ignominiously shoved against the kitchen wall, because I did not answer those questions at sufficient length.

I felt convinced that if I described Miss Havisham's as my eyes had seen it, I should not be understood. Not only that, but I felt convinced that Miss Havisham too would not be understood; and although she was perfectly incomprehensible to me, I entertained an impression that there would be something coarse and treacherous in my dragging her as she really was (to say nothing of Miss Estella) before the contemplation of Mrs. Joe. Consequently, I said as little as I could, and had my face shoved against the kitchen wall.

The worst of it was that bullying old Pumblechook, preyed upon by a devouring curiosity to be informed of all I had seen and heard, came gaping over in his chaise-cart at teatime, to have the details divulged to him.

"Well, boy," Uncle Pumblechook began, as soon as he was seated in the chair of honor by the fire. "How did you get on uptown?"

I answered, "Pretty well, sir," and my sister shook her fist at me.

"Pretty well?" Mr. Pumblechook repeated. "Pretty well is no answer. Tell us what you mean by pretty well, boy."

My sister with an exclamation of impatience was going to fly at me—I had no shadow of defense, for Joe was busy in the forge—when Mr. Pumblechook interposed with "No! Don't lose your temper. Leave this lad to me, ma'am; leave this lad to me." Mr. Pumblechook then turned me toward him, as if he were going to cut my hair. "Boy! What like is Miss Havisham?" Mr. Pumblechook began, folding his arms tight on his chest.

1 "Very tall and dark," I told him.

"Is she, uncle?" asked my sister.

Mr. Pumblechook winked assent, from which I at once inferred that he had never seen Miss Havisham, for she was nothing of the kind.

"Good!" said Mr. Pumblechook, conceitedly. "This is the way to have him! We are beginning to hold our own, I think, mum?"

2 "I am sure, uncle," returned Mrs. Joe; "I wish you had him always; you know so well how to deal with him."

"Now, boy! What was she a-doing of, when you went in today?" asked Mr. Pumblechook.

"She was sitting," I answered, "in a black velvet coach."

Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe stared at one another—as they well might—and both repeated, "In a black velvet coach?"

"Yes," said I. "And Miss Estella—that's her niece, I think—handed her in cake and wine at the coach window, on a gold plate. And we all had cake and wine on gold plates. And I got up behind the coach to eat mine, because she told

3 me to."

27

Thick boots indicative of working class; thin boots characteristic of gentry who did not do heavy labor and therefore did not need protective, durable footwear.

## Chapter 8

1

Reader already knows Havisham is not tall and dark, but Pumblechook does not. Instead of acknowledging his ignorance, however, he claims to know Pip's description of her is true.

2

Pumblechook has no children of his own and does not know how to deal with Pip, as evidenced by fact that Pip, knowing uncle is victim of his untruths, continues to fabricate his experience at Miss Havisham's house. Irony of Mrs. Joe's statement adds to humor.

3

*What can be inferred about Pip and the others from their behavior?* Pip's continuation of preposterous account suggests growing disdain for his people; Mrs. Joe proves gullible; Dickens' satirical treatment of Pumblechook emphasizes his pretentiousness.

4 "When I recall" reminds reader that older Pip is telling story of his youth.

5 **Characterization.** Although Pip feels no remorse about lying to his sister and Pumblechook, Pip does feel guilty for telling Joe lies. Pip has a strong conscience, especially when dealing with his friend Joe.

6 Mrs. Joe and Uncle Pumblechook have "expectations" of personal profit from Pip's association with Miss Havisham.

7 Joe is moral force in novel; through example and his love, he has greatest impact on Pip.

Mr. Pumblechook and Mrs. Joe stared at one another again, in utter amazement. I was perfectly frantic—a reckless witness under the torture—and would have told them anything.

"Did you ever see her in it, uncle?" asked Mrs. Joe.

"How could I," he returned, forced to the admission, "when I never see her in my life? Never clapped eyes upon her!"

"Goodness, uncle! And yet you have spoken to her?"

"Why, don't you know," said Mr. Pumblechook testily, "that when I have been there, I have been took up to the outside of her door, and the door has stood ajar, and she has spoken to me that way. What did you play at, boy?"

4 "We played with flags," I said. (I beg to observe that I think of myself with amazement, when I recall the lies I told on this occasion.)

"Flags!" echoed my sister.

"Yes," said I. "Estella waved a blue flag, and I waved a red one, and Miss Havisham waved one sprinkled all over with little gold stars, out at the coach window. And then we all waved our swords and hurrahd."

If they had asked me any more questions, I should undoubtedly have betrayed myself. The subject still held them when Joe came in from his work to have a cup of tea. To whom my sister, more for the relief of her own mind than for the gratification of his, related my pretended experiences.

5 Now, when I saw Joe open his blue eyes and roll them all round the kitchen in helpless amazement, I was overtaken by penitence. Toward Joe, and Joe only, I considered myself a young monster, while they sat debating what results would come to me from Miss Havisham's acquaintance and favor. They had no doubt that Miss Havisham would "do something" for me. My sister stood out for "property." Mr. Pumblechook was in favor of a

6 handsome premium<sup>1</sup> for binding me apprentice to some genteel trade—say, the corn and seed trade, for instance.

After Mr. Pumblechook had driven off, and when my sister was washing up, I stole into the forge to Joe, and remained by him until he had done for the night. Then I said, "Before the fire goes out, Joe, I should like to tell you something."

"Should you, Pip?" said Joe, drawing his shoeing stool near the forge. "Then tell us. What is it, Pip?"

"Joe," said I, taking hold of his rolled-up shirt sleeve, and twisting it between my finger and thumb, "you remember all that about Miss Havisham's?"

"Remember?" said Joe. "I believe you! Wonderful!"

"It's a terrible thing, Joe; it ain't true."

"What are you telling of, Pip?" cried Joe, falling back in the greatest amazement. "You don't mean to say it's——"

"Yes, I do; it's lies, Joe."

7 As I fixed my eyes hopelessly on Joe, Joe contemplated me in dismay. "Pip, old chap! This won't do, old fellow! I say! Where do you expect to go to?"

"It's terrible, Joe; ain't it?"

"Terrible?" cried Joe. "Awful! What possessed you?"

"I don't know what possessed me, Joe," I replied, letting his shirt sleeve go, and sitting down in the ashes at his feet, hanging my head; "but I wish you hadn't taught me to call knaves at cards jacks, and I wish my boots weren't so thick nor my hands so coarse."

And then I told Joe that I felt very miserable, and that I hadn't been able to explain myself to Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, who were so rude to me, and that there had been a beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's who

1. **premium:** a fee paid to a master workman by a prospective apprentice.

was dreadfully proud, and that she had said I was common, and that I knew I was common, and that I wished I was not common, and that the lies had come of it somehow, though I didn't know how.

"There's one thing you may be sure of, Pip," said Joe, "namely, that lies is lies. Howsoever they come, they didn't ought to come, and they 11 come from the father of lies, and work round 8 to the same. Don't you tell me no more of 'em, Pip. *That* ain't the way to get out of being common, old chap. And as to being common, I don't make it out at all clear. You are uncommon in some things. You're uncommon small. Likewise you're a uncommon scholar."

"No, I am ignorant and backward, Joe."

"Why, see what a letter you wrote last night! Wrote in print even! I've seen letters—ah! and from gentlefolks!—that I'll swear weren't wrote in print," said Joe.

"I have learned next to nothing, Joe. You 9 think much of me. It's only that."

"Well, Pip," said Joe, "you must be a common scholar afore you can be a uncommon one, I should hope!"

"You are not angry with me, Joe?"

"No, old chap. That's all, old chap, and don't never do it no more."

When I got up to my little room and said my prayers, my young mind was in that disturbed and unthankful state that I thought long after I laid me down, how common Estella would consider Joe, a mere blacksmith, how thick his boots, and how coarse his hands. I thought how Joe and my sister were then sitting in the kitchen, and how I had come up to bed from the kitchen, and how Miss Havisham and Estella never sat in a kitchen, but were far above the level of such common doings. I fell asleep recalling what I "used to do" when I was at Miss Havisham's; as though I had been there weeks or months, instead of hours.

10 That was a memorable day to me, for it

made great changes in me. But it is the same with any life. Imagine one selected day struck out of it, and think how different its course would have been. Pause, you who read this, and think for a moment of the long chain of iron or gold, of thorns or flowers, that would never have bound you, but for the formation of the first link on one memorable day.

## Chapter 9

*A mysterious stranger appears with a surprise for Pip.*

The felicitous idea occurred to me a morning or two later when I woke, that the best step I could take toward making myself uncommon was to get out of Biddy everything she knew. I mentioned to Biddy when I went to Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's at night, that I had a particular reason for wishing to get on in life, and that I should feel very much obliged to her if she would impart all her learning to me.

1 Biddy, who was the most obliging of girls, immediately said she would, and indeed began to carry out her promise within five minutes.

The educational scheme or course established by Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt may be resolved into the following synopsis. The pupils ate apples and put straws down one another's backs until Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt collected her energies and made an indiscriminate totter at them with a birch rod. After receiving the charge with every mark of derision, the pupils formed in line and buzzingly passed a ragged book from hand to hand. The book had an alphabet in it, some figures and tables, and a little spelling. Biddy gave out the number of the page, and then we all read aloud in a frightful chorus, Biddy leading with a high, shrill, monotonous voice, and none of us having the

8

*What is revealed about Joe's personality when he tells Pip "lies is lies"? Even though Joe is uneducated, he knows the value of honesty and integrity.*

9

Pip is too young to see the value of Joe's love and flipantly says, "It's only that."

10

Here, narration switches from presentation of young Pip's experiences to commentary about these experiences from adult perspective. At times, reader "watches" young Pip's actions; at other times, Pip addresses reader directly.

11

*What is the significance of this chapter?* Beginning of changes in Pip's attitude and personality. Experience at Miss Havisham's shakes him so much that he re-evaluates entire life. Chapter is so significant that Pip the narrator makes special attempt to alert reader to its importance.

## Chapter 9

1

Foil. Biddy's good nature provides contrast to Estella's personality.



2

A Gothic capital *D* is ornate, like a design for a buckle.

3

**Suspense.** Introduction of mysterious stranger—who looks at, nods to, and offers seat to Pip—arouses both Pip's and reader's curiosity.

4

**Characterization.** Joe's remark shows he is rather uncomfortable with someone else, especially stranger, buying him drinks; characterizes Joe as honest, hard-working man who asks no favors of others, preferring to pay his own way.

5

"Originate a sentiment" means "name what you would like."

6

**Suspense.** Conversation about Joe and Pip's experience on marsh hints at stranger's connection with convict.

least notion of, or reverence for, what we were reading about.

It appeared to me that it would take time to become uncommon under these circumstances; nevertheless, I resolved to try it, and that very evening Biddy entered on our special agreement by lending me, to copy at home, a large Old English *D* which she had imitated from the heading of some newspaper, and which I supposed, until she told me what it was, to be a design for a buckle.

Of course there was a public house<sup>1</sup> in the village, and of course Joe liked sometimes to smoke his pipe there. I had received strict orders from my sister to call for him at the Three Jolly Bargemen that evening, on my way from school, and bring him home at my peril. To the Three Jolly Bargemen, therefore, I directed my steps.

Joe was smoking his pipe in company with Mr. Wopsle and a stranger. Joe greeted me as usual with "Halloa, Pip, old chap!" and the moment he said that, the stranger turned his head and looked at me.

He was a secret-looking man whom I had never seen before. His head was all on one side, and one of his eyes was half shut up, as if he were taking aim at something with an invisible gun. He had a pipe in his mouth, and he took it out, and, after slowly blowing all his smoke away and looking hard at me all the time, nodded. So I nodded, and then he nodded again, and made room on the settle<sup>2</sup> beside him that I might sit down there.

But, as I was used to sit beside Joe whenever I entered that place of resort, I said, "No, thank you, sir," and fell into the space Joe made for me on the opposite settle. The strange man, after glancing at Joe, and seeing

that his attention was otherwise engaged, nodded to me again when I had taken my seat, and then rubbed his leg—in a very odd way, as it struck me.

"You were saying," said the strange man, turning to Joe, "that you was a blacksmith. What'll you drink, Mr. Gargery? At my expense? To top up with?"

"Well," said Joe, "to tell you the truth, I ain't much in the habit of drinking at anybody's expense but my own."

"Habit? No," returned the stranger, "but once and away, and on a Saturday night, too. Come! Put a name to it, Mr. Gargery."

"I wouldn't wish to be stiff company," said Joe. "Rum."

"Rum," repeated the stranger. "And will the other gentleman originate a sentiment?"

"Rum," said Mr. Wopsle.

"Three rums!" cried the stranger, calling to the landlord. "Glasses round!"

The stranger put his legs up on the settle that he had to himself. He wore a flapping broad-brimmed traveler's hat and under it a handkerchief tied over his head in the manner of a cap, so that he showed no hair.

"I am not acquainted with this country, gentlemen, but it seems a solitary country toward the river."

"Most marshes is solitary," said Joe.

"No doubt, no doubt. Do you find any gypsies, now, or tramps, or vagrants of any sort, out there?"

"No," said Joe; "none but a runaway convict now and then. And we don't find *them* easy."

"Seems you have been out after such?" asked the stranger.

"Once," returned Joe. "Not that we wanted to take them, you understand; we went out as lookers-on, me and Mr. Wopsle and Pip. Didn't us, Pip?"

"Yes, Joe."

The stranger looked at me again and said,

1. **public house:** in England, a bar or tavern, often called a *pub*.

2. **settle:** bench.

"He's a likely young parcel of bones, that. What is it you call him?"

"Pip," said Joe.

"Christened Pip?"

"No, not christened Pip."

"Surname Pip?"

"No," said Joe; "it's a kind of a family name what he gave himself when a infant, and is called by."

"Son of yours?"

"Well—" said Joe meditatively, "well—no. No, he ain't."

"Nevvy?"<sup>3</sup> said the strange man.

"Well," said Joe, "he is not—no, not to deceive you, he is *not*—my nevvy."

"What the blue blazes is he?" asked the stranger.

Mr. Wopsle expounded the ties between me and Joe. All this while the strange man looked at nobody but me, and looked at me as if he were determined to have a shot at me at last, and bring me down. But he said nothing until the glasses were brought; and then he made his shot, and a most extraordinary shot it was.

He stirred his rum-and-water pointedly at me, and he tasted his rum-and-water pointedly at me—not with a spoon that was brought to him, but *with a file*.

7 He did this so that nobody but I saw the file; and when he had done it, he wiped the file and put it in a breast pocket. I knew it to be Joe's file, and I knew that he knew my convict, the moment I saw the instrument. I sat gazing at him, spellbound. Joe got up to go, and took me by the hand.

"Stop half a moment, Mr. Gargery," said the strange man. "I think I've got a bright new shilling somewhere in my pocket, and if I have, the boy shall have it."

He looked it out from a handful of small change, folded it in some crumpled paper, and

gave it to me. "Yours!" said he. "Mind! Your own."

I thanked him, staring at him far beyond the bounds of good manners, and holding tight to Joe. On the way home I was in a manner stupefied by this turning up of my old misdeed and old acquaintance, and could think of nothing else.

My sister was not in a very bad temper when we presented ourselves in the kitchen, and Joe was encouraged by that unusual circumstance to tell her about the bright shilling. "A bad un, I'll be bound," said Mrs. Joe triumphantly, "or he wouldn't have given it to the boy. Let's look at it."

I took it out of the paper, and it proved to be a good one. "But what's this?" said Mrs. Joe, throwing down the shilling and catching up the paper. "Two one-pound notes?"<sup>4</sup>

Joe caught up his hat again, and ran with them to the Jolly Bargemen to restore them to their owner. While he was gone I sat down on my usual stool and looked vacantly at my sister, feeling pretty sure that the man would not be there.

Presently Joe came back, saying that the man was gone, but that he, Joe, had left word at the Three Jolly Bargemen concerning the notes. Then my sister sealed them up in a piece of paper, and put them under some dried rose leaves in an ornamental teapot on the top of a press in the parlor. There they remained a nightmare to me many and many a night and 10 day.

I had sadly broken sleep when I got to bed, through thinking of the strange man and of the guiltily coarse and common thing it was to be on secret terms of conspiracy with convicts—a feature in my low career that I had previously forgotten. I was haunted by the file

4. **Two one-pound notes:** forty shillings, or almost ten dollars in American money, which was a considerable sum of money in Dickens' time.

7

Incident reestablishes Pip's association with convict, who will reappear.

8

**Foreshadowing.** Later convict will again show his appreciation—with money—for Pip's assistance.

9

**Press:** large, upright piece of furniture for storing clothes, linen.

10

**Why did the pound notes remain a nightmare for Pip?** Pip associates notes with convict, his role in convict's escape, his guilt over his relationship with convict, and his fear that association with convict will be discovered. Notes symbolize Pip's inner conflicts, fears, and past encounters.

3. **Nevvy:** nephew.

11

**Foreshadowing.** Pip's nightmare serves as hint to readers that Pip will see convict again.

## Chapter 10

1

That Miss Havisham apparently has all clocks in Satis House stopped at same time shows her unrelenting belief that her life stopped at that moment.

2

Miss Havisham's guests have some "great expectations" of their own. Pip has perceptively concluded that they are catering to Miss Havisham in hopes of being included in her will.

3

As Pip observes, Camilla and Mrs. Joe are alike in that both are talkative and both hope to get Miss Havisham's wealth, Camilla through servility and Mrs. Joe through Pip.

4

**About whom are people speaking?** About someone named Matthew (later he is identified as Mr. Matthew Pocket, father of Herbert who is to become Pip's best friend).

5

**Irony.** Cousin Raymond characterizes Matthew as lacking proper behavior. Reader learns later that Matthew is, in fact, a proper man; it is Raymond and other cousins who lack propriety.

too. A dread possessed me that when I least expected it, the file would reappear. I coaxed myself to sleep by thinking of Miss Havisham's next Wednesday; and in my sleep I saw the file coming at me out of a door, without seeing who held it, and I screamed myself awake.

## Chapter 10

*We meet Camilla and her husband, Miss Sarah Pocket, Georgiana, and a pale young gentleman.*

At the appointed time I returned to Miss Havisham's, and my hesitating ring at the gate brought out Estella. She locked it after admitting me, as she had done before, and took me to quite another part of the house, a small paved courtyard, the opposite side of which was formed by a detached dwelling house. There was a clock in the outer wall of this house. Like the clock in Miss Havisham's room, and like Miss Havisham's watch, it had stopped at twenty minutes to nine.

We went in at the door, which stood open, and into a gloomy room with a low ceiling, on the ground floor at the back. There was some company in the room, and Estella said, "You are to go and stand there, boy, till you are wanted." "There" being the window, I crossed to it and stood "there," in a very uncomfortable state of mind, looking out.

I divined that my coming had stopped conversation in the room, and that its other occupants were looking at me. There were three ladies in the room and one gentleman. Before I had been standing at the window five minutes, they somehow conveyed to me that they

2 were all toadies and humbugs.<sup>1</sup>

They all had a listless and dreary air of wait-

1. **toadies and humbugs:** flatterers and people who are not what they pretend to be.

ing somebody's pleasure. The most talkative of the ladies, whose name was Camilla, very much reminded me of my sister, with the difference that she was older and of a blunter cast of features.

"Poor dear soul!" said this lady. "Nobody's enemy but his own!"

"It would be much more commendable to be somebody else's enemy," said the gentleman; "far more natural."

"Cousin Raymond," observed another lady, "we are to love our neighbor."

"Sarah Pocket," returned Cousin Raymond, "if a man is not his own neighbor, who is?"

"Poor soul!" Camilla presently went on (I knew they had all been looking at me in the meantime), "he is so very strange! Would anyone believe that when Tom's wife died, he actually could not be induced to see the importance of the children's having the deepest of trimmings to their mourning? 'Good Lord!' says he, 'Camilla, what can it signify so long as the poor bereaved little things are in black?' So like Matthew! The idea!"

4 "Good points in him, good points in him," said Cousin Raymond, "but he never had and he never will have any sense of the proprieties."

The ringing of a distant bell, combined with the echoing of some cry or call along the passage by which I had come, interrupted the conversation and caused Estella to say to me, "Now, boy!"

As we were going with our candle along the dark passage, Estella stopped all of a sudden and, facing round, said in her taunting manner, with her face quite close to mine:

"Well?"

"Well, miss," I answered, almost falling over her and checking myself.

She stood looking at me, and of course I stood looking at her.

"Am I pretty?"



"Yes, I think you are very pretty."

"Am I insulting?"

"Not as much as you were last time," said I.

"Not so much so?"

"No."

She slapped my face with such force as she had.

6 "Now?" said she. "You little coarse monster, what do you think of me now?"

"I shall not tell you."

"Because you are going to tell upstairs. Is that it?"

"No," said I, "that's not it."

"Why don't you cry again, you little wretch?"

"Because I'll never cry for you again," said I. Which was, I suppose, as false a declaration as ever was made; for I was inwardly crying for her then, and I know what I know of the pain she cost me afterward.

We went on our way upstairs after this episode; and, as we were going up, we met a gentleman groping his way down.

"Whom have we here?" asked the gentleman, stopping and looking at me.

"A boy," said Estella.

7 He was a burly man of an exceedingly dark complexion, with an exceedingly large head. He took my chin in his large hand and turned up my face to have a look at me by the light of the candle. He was prematurely bald on the top of his head, and had bushy black eyebrows that wouldn't lie down, but stood up bristling. His eyes were set very deep in his head, and were disagreeably sharp and suspicious. He had a large watch chain, and strong black dots where his beard and whiskers would have been if he had let them. He was nothing to me, and I could have had no foresight then that he ever would be anything to me, but it happened that I had this opportunity of observing him well.

"Boy of the neighborhood? Hey?" said he.

"Yes, sir," said I.

9 "How do *you* come here?"

"Miss Havisham sent for me, sir," I explained.

"Well! Behave yourself. I have a pretty large experience of boys, and you're a bad set of fellows. Now mind!" said he, biting the side of his great forefinger, as he frowned at me, "you behave yourself!"

With these words he released me—which I was glad of, for his hand smelt of scented soap—and went his way downstairs. We were soon in Miss Havisham's room. Estella left me standing near the door, and I stood there until Miss Havisham cast her eyes upon me from the dressing table.

"So!" she said. "The days have worn away, have they?"

"Yes, ma'am. Today is——"

"There, there, there!" with the impatient movement of her fingers. "I don't want to know. Are you ready to play?"

I was obliged to answer in some confusion, "I don't think I am, ma'am."

"Not at cards again?" she demanded with a searching look.

"Yes, ma'am; I could do that, if I was wanted."

"Since this house strikes you old and grave, boy," said Miss Havisham impatiently, "and you are unwilling to play, are you willing to work?"

10 I could answer this inquiry with a better heart than I had been able to find for the other question, and I said I was quite willing.

"Then go into that opposite room," said she, pointing at the door behind me with her withered hand, "and wait there till I come."

I crossed the staircase landing and entered the room she indicated. From that room, too, the daylight was completely excluded, and it had an airless smell that was oppressive. Every discernible thing in it was covered with dust and mold, and dropping to pieces. The most

6 Estella echoes words Pip used to describe her in his whispered conversation with Miss Havisham. Evidently, she has shared Pip's thoughts with Estella.

7 **Characterization.** Burly gentleman on stairs is Jaggers, Miss Havisham's peculiar lawyer. Description of him as large, dark, and suspicious emphasizes his mean disposition.

8 Pip is telling readers that Jaggers will play important role in his story.

9 **Diction.** "You" is stressed in italics to underscore Jaggers' sarcasm and rudeness. With word *you*, Jaggers is implying Pip has no right to be at Satis House because he is a working-class boy.

10 **Why does Pip welcome the offer of work instead of play?** Responses will vary. Playing with Estella has been humiliating and painful.

11

**Symbol.** Cake is reminder of day she was jilted, and its decrepitude is symbolic of her own.

12

Hoping to inherit her wealth, Miss Havisham's relations compete to flatter and feign concern for her.

13

**Irony.** Camilla, in her claim to abhor emotional displays, reveals that her affection for Miss Havisham is contrived.

14

Camilla portrays Matthew as uncaring so that she, in contrast, will appear devoted to Miss Havisham. Matthew, only absent relative, chooses not to fawn and flatter.

prominent object was a long table with a tablecloth spread on it, as if a feast had been in preparation when the house and the clocks all stopped together. A centerpiece of some kind was in the middle of this cloth; it was so heavily overhung with cobwebs that its form was quite undistinguishable. I saw speckled-legged spiders with blotchy bodies running home to it, and running out from it.

I heard the mice, too, rattling behind the panels.

These crawling things had fascinated my attention, and I was watching them from a distance when Miss Havisham laid a hand upon my shoulder. In her other hand she had a crutch-headed stick on which she leaned, and she looked like the witch of the place.

"This," said she, pointing to the long table with her stick, "is where I will be laid when I am dead. They shall come and look at me here."

11 "What do you think that is," she asked me, again pointing with her stick; "that, where those cobwebs are?"

"I can't guess, ma'am."

"It's a great cake. A bride cake. Mine!"

She looked all round the room in a glaring manner, and then said, leaning on me while her hand twitched my shoulder, "Come, come, come! Walk me, walk me!"

I made out from this that the work I had to do was to walk Miss Havisham round and round the room. Accordingly, she leaned on my shoulder and we went away at a pace.

After a while she said, "Call Estella," so I went out on the landing and roared that name as I had done on the previous occasion. When her light appeared, I returned to Miss Havisham, and we started away again round and round the room.

If only Estella had come to be a spectator of our proceedings, I should have felt sufficiently discontented; but, as she brought with her the

three ladies and the gentleman whom I had seen below, I didn't know what to do. I would have stopped; but Miss Havisham twitched my shoulder and we posted on.

"Dear Miss Havisham," said Miss Sarah Pocket. "How well you look!"

"I do not," returned Miss Havisham. "I am yellow skin and bone."

Camilla brightened when Miss Pocket met with this rebuff; and she murmured, as she plaintively contemplated Miss Havisham, "Poor dear soul! Certainly not to be expected to look well, poor thing. The idea!"

12 "And how are you?" said Miss Havisham to Camilla. As we were close to Camilla then, I would have stopped as a matter of course, only Miss Havisham wouldn't stop. We swept on, and I felt that I was highly obnoxious to Camilla.

"Thank you, Miss Havisham," she returned. "I am as well as can be expected."

"Why, what's the matter with you?" asked Miss Havisham, with exceeding sharpness.

"Nothing worth mentioning," replied Camilla. "I don't wish to make a display of my feelings, but I have habitually thought of you more in the night than I am quite equal to."

"Then don't think of me," retorted Miss Havisham.

13 "Oh!" cried Camilla. "It's a weakness to be so affectionate, but I can't help it."

Miss Havisham and I kept going round and round the room; now brushing against the skirts of the visitors; now giving them the whole length of the dismal chamber.

14 "There's Matthew!" said Camilla. "Never mixing with any natural ties, never coming here to see how Miss Havisham is!"

When this same Matthew was mentioned, Miss Havisham stopped me and herself, and stood looking at the speaker. This change had a great influence in bringing Camilla's chemistry to a sudden end.

"Matthew will come and see me at last," said Miss Havisham sternly, "when I am laid on that table. That will be his place—there," striking the table with her stick, "at my head! And yours will be there! And your husband's there! And Sarah Pocket's there! And Georgiana's 15 there! Now you all know where to take your stations when you come to feast upon me.<sup>2</sup> And now go!"

At the mention of each name, she had struck the table with her stick in a new place. She now said, "Walk me, walk me!" and we went on again.

While Estella was away lighting them down, Miss Havisham still walked with her hand on my shoulder, but more and more slowly. At last she stopped before the fire and said, after muttering and looking at it some seconds:

"This is my birthday, Pip."

I was going to wish her many happy returns, when she lifted her stick.

"I don't suffer it to be spoken of. I don't suffer those who were here just now, or anyone, to speak of it. They come here on the day, but they dare not refer to it."

Of course I made no further effort to refer to it.

"On this day of the year, long before you were born, this heap of decay," stabbing with her crutched stick at the pile of cobwebs on the table, but not touching it, "was brought here. It and I have worn away together. The mice have 16 gnawed at it, and sharper teeth than teeth of mice have gnawed at me."

She held the head of her stick against her heart as she stood looking at the table; she in her once white dress, all yellow and withered; the once white cloth all yellow and withered; everything around in a state to crumble under a touch.

2. *feast . . . me*: that is, to collect their shares of her will after her death.

"When the ruin is complete," said she, with a ghastly look, "and when they lay me dead, in my bride's dress on the bride's table—which shall be done, and which will be the finished curse upon him—so much the better if it is 17 done on this day!"

I remained quiet. Estella returned, and she too remained quiet. At length, Miss Havisham said, "Let me see you two play at cards; why have you not begun?" With that, we returned to her room, and sat down as before; I was beggared as before, and again, as before, Miss Havisham watched us all the time, directed my attention to Estella's beauty, and made me notice it the more by trying her jewels on Estella's breast and hair.

Estella, for her part, likewise treated me as before, except that she did not condescend to speak. When we had played some half-dozen games, a day was appointed for my return, and I was taken down into the yard to be fed in the former doglike manner. There, too, I was again left to wander about as I liked.

I strolled into the garden and found myself in the dismal corner upon which I had looked out of a window. Never questioning for a moment that the house was now empty, I looked in at another window, and found myself, to my great surprise, exchanging a broad stare with a pale young gentleman with red eyelids and light hair.

This pale young gentleman quickly disappeared and reappeared beside me. He had been at his books when I had found myself staring at him, and I now saw that he was inky. 18

"Who let you in?" said he.

"Miss Estella."

"Who gave you leave to prowl about?"

"Miss Estella."

"Come and fight," said the pale young gentleman.

What could I do but follow him? I have often asked myself the question since; but,

## 15

**Metaphor.** Miss Havisham's statement that her relatives will "feast" on her dead body is repugnant, but it expresses how she feels about their greed.

## 16

**What are the "sharper teeth" that have gnawed at Miss Havisham?** Responses will vary. She is probably referring to the pain of being jilted.

## 17

Miss Havisham expects to culminate "curse upon him" (faithless groom) with her death.

## 18

**Characterization.** After miserable card game and "doglike" feeding, Pip meets boy later identified as Herbert Pocket, Matthew's son. "Inky" implies that boy has been using quill pen and therefore that he is educated.



19

*What actions show Herbert is not really an experienced fighter?* Herbert's comical preparations for bout prove he has bookish and chivalrous notions of fighting but has no actual experience.

20

**Characterization.** Although Herbert has challenged Pip to fight, Herbert does not seem to be a bully. Pip even remarks that he admires Herbert because he continues to be knocked down before he gives up. Herbert is more comical here than brutal.

21

Estella has bright flush on face and even allows Pip to kiss her. Apparently Estella has watched fight with pleasure and is conferring a kiss on victor.

22

*Is it odd that, despite all the cruelties Estella has inflicted upon Pip, he still cares for her and considers it an honor to kiss her cheek?* Responses will vary. Love is often unreasonable, and Pip sees Estella as his unattainable star; some people desire most what they feel they can never have.

23

**Parallelism.** Repetition of "what with the" underscores length of Pip's already trying day.

what else could I do? His manner was so final and I was so astonished that I followed where he led, as if I had been under a spell.

"Stop a minute, though," he said, wheeling round before we had gone many paces. "I ought to give you a reason for fighting, too. There it is!" In a most irritating manner he instantly slapped his hands against one another, daintily flung one of his legs up behind him, pulled my hair, slapped his hands again, dipped his head, and butted it into my stomach.

I hit out at him, and was going to hit out again, when he said, "Aha! Would you?" and began dancing backward and forward in a manner quite unparalleled within my limited experience.

"Laws of the game" said he. Here, he skipped from his left leg on to his right. "Regular rules!" Here, he skipped from his right leg on to his left. "Come to the ground, and go through the preliminaries!" Here, he dodged backward and forward, and did all sorts of things while I looked helplessly at him.

I was secretly afraid of him when I saw him so dexterous; but I followed him without a word to a retired nook of the garden. On his asking me if I was satisfied with the ground, and on my replying "Yes," he begged my leave to absent himself for a moment, and quickly returned with a bottle of water and a sponge dipped in vinegar. "Available for both," he said, and fell to pulling off, not only his jacket and waistcoat, but his shirt, too, in a manner at once lighthearted, businesslike, and bloodthirsty. Although he did not look very healthy, these dreadful preparations quite appalled me. I judged him to be about my own age, but he was much taller.

My heart failed me when I saw him squaring at me with every demonstration of mechanical nicety, and eyeing my anatomy as if he were minutely choosing his bone. I never have been

so surprised in my life as I was when I let out the first blow and saw him lying on his back, looking up at me with a bloody nose.

But he was on his feet directly, and after sponging himself began squaring again. The second greatest surprise I have ever had in my life was seeing him on his back again, looking up at me out of a black eye.

20 His spirit inspired me with great respect. He seemed to have no strength, and he never once hit me hard, and he was always knocked down. He got heavily bruised, but he came up again and again until at last he got a bad fall with the back of his head against the wall. Even after that, he got up and turned round confusedly a few times; but finally went on his knees to his sponge and threw it up, panting out, "That means you have won."

He seemed so brave and innocent that although I had not proposed the contest, I felt but a gloomy satisfaction in my victory. However, I got dressed and said, "Can I help you?" and he said, "No, thankee," and I said, "Good afternoon," and *he* said, "Same to you."

When I got into the courtyard, I found Estella waiting with the keys. But she neither asked me where I had been, nor why I had kept her waiting; and there was a bright flush upon her face, as though something had happened to delight her. Instead of going straight to the gate, too, she stepped back into the passage and beckoned me.

21 "Come here! You may kiss me if you like."

I kissed her cheek as she turned it to me. I think I would have gone through a great deal to kiss her cheek. But I felt that the kiss was given to the coarse common boy as a piece of money might have been, and that it was worth nothing.

23 What with the birthday visitors, and what with the cards, and what with the fight, my stay had lasted so long that when I neared home, the light off the point on the marshes was

gleaming against a black night sky, and Joe's furnace was flinging a path of fire across the road.

## Chapter 11

*Pip becomes Joe's apprentice.*

My mind grew very uneasy on the subject of the pale young gentleman. The more I thought of the fight, and recalled the pale young gentleman on his back, the more certain it appeared that something would be done to me. When the day came round for my return to the scene of the deed of violence, my terrors reached their height. However, go to Miss Havisham's I must, and go I did. And behold! nothing came of the late struggle. It was not alluded to in any way, and no pale young gentleman was to be discovered on the premises.

On the broad landing between Miss Havisham's own room and that other room in which the long table was laid out, I saw a garden-chair—a light chair on wheels, that you pushed from behind. I entered, that same day, on a regular occupation of pushing Miss Havisham in this chair (when she was tired of walking with her hand upon my shoulder) round her own room, and across the landing, and round the other room. Over and over and over again, we would make these journeys, and sometimes they would last as long as three hours at a stretch. I fall into a general mention of these journeys as numerous, because it was at once settled that I should return every alternate day at noon, and because I am now going to sum up a period of at least eight or ten months.

As we began to be more used to one another, Miss Havisham talked more to me, and asked me such questions as what had I learned and what was I going to be? I told her I was going

to be apprenticed to Joe, I believed; and I enlarged upon my knowing nothing and wanting to know everything, in the hope that she might offer some help toward that desirable end. But she did not; on the contrary, she seemed to prefer my being ignorant. Neither did she ever give me any money or anything but my daily dinner—nor even stipulate that I should be paid for my services.

Estella was always about, and always let me in and out, but never told me I might kiss her again. Sometimes, she would be quite familiar with me; sometimes, she would tell me energetically that she hated me. Miss Havisham would often ask me in a whisper, or when we were alone, “Does she grow prettier and prettier, Pip?” And when I said “Yes” (for indeed she did), would seem to enjoy it greedily. Also, when we played at cards, Miss Havisham would look on, with a miserly relish of Estella's moods, whatever they were. And sometimes, when her moods were so many and so contradictory that I was puzzled what to say or do, Miss Havisham would embrace her with lavish fondness, murmuring something in her ear that sounded like “Break their hearts, my pride and hope, break their hearts and have no mercy!” *break their hearts,*

Perhaps I might have told Joe about the pale young gentleman if I had not previously been betrayed into those enormous inventions to which I had confessed. I reposed complete confidence in no one but Biddy; but I told poor Biddy everything. Why it came natural for me to do so, and why Biddy had a deep concern in everything I told her, I did not know then, though I think I know now.

Meanwhile, councils went on in the kitchen at home. Pumblechook and my sister would pair off in nonsensical speculations about Miss Havisham, and about what she would do with me and for me. In these discussions, Joe bore no part. But he was often talked at, while they

## Chapter 11

1

Words *over and over* and *journeys* emphasize Miss Havisham's constant returning to the past as Pip wheels her around the same rooms.

2

Pip is approaching age of apprenticeship, normally about fourteen. Pip, however, like Dickens in his youth, wants to acquire an education and to better himself.

3

**Characterization.** Miss Havisham is manipulative and enjoys making people unhappy. Her whispers to Pip seem to be taunts, leading him on, making him more vulnerable to Estella's moods.

4

**Why does Miss Havisham tell Estella to “break their hearts”? How does this affect Estella?** Responses will vary. She vicariously seeks revenge for being jilted. Estella is being schooled to hate; Pip is there for her practice.

5

Biddy's “deep concern” undoubtedly stems from her kind, thoughtful nature and her unrequited love for Pip.

6

“Councils” is humorous word choice to describe Mrs. Joe's and Pumblechook's scheming; denotes official, formal meeting on matters of importance.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Relating Expression Skills

The movie set is ornate, capturing the strange, rich atmosphere of Miss Havisham's bridal room. Ask students to imagine that they are the stage manager for a live production of *Great Expectations*, and as such, they are responsible for creating a set appropriate for the stage on a limited budget. What items would they select? How would they establish the appropriate atmosphere?

#### Ideas for Writing

Have students pretend to be Miss Havisham's friend. Ask them to write a letter defining what they think has caused Miss Havisham's eccentricities and what they would suggest to help her return to sanity.







were in progress, by reason of Mrs. Joe's perceiving that he was not favorable to my being taken from the forge.

We went on in this way for a long time, when, one day, Miss Havisham stopped short as she and I were walking and said with some displeasure:

7 "You are growing tall, Pip!"

She said no more at the time, but she presently stopped and looked at me again; and after that looked frowning and moody. On the next day of my attendance, she stayed me with a movement of her impatient fingers:

"Tell me the name of that blacksmith of yours."

"Joe Gargery, ma'am."

"Meaning the master you were to be apprenticed to?"

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

"You had better be apprenticed at once. Would Gargery come here with you, and bring your indentures,<sup>1</sup> do you think?"

"At any particular time, Miss Havisham?"

"There, there! I know nothing about times. Let him come soon, and come along with you."

8 When I delivered this message at home, my sister "went on the Ram-page," threw a candlestick at Joe, got out the dustpan—which was always a very bad sign—and cleaned us out of house and home so that we stood shivering in the backyard. It was ten o'clock at night before we ventured to creep in again.

9 It was a trial to my feelings, on the next day but one, to see Joe arraying himself in his Sunday clothes to accompany me to Miss Havisham's. At breakfast time, my sister declared her intention of going to town with us, and being left at Uncle Pumblechook's and called for "when we had done with our fine ladies."

1. **indentures**: a contract binding an apprentice to a master. See footnote on page 673.

7

Miss Havisham wants Pip to remain as he is. She is displeased that Pip is growing up, and she wants to be rid of him.

8

*Why does Mrs. Joe fly into rage when she hears that Miss Havisham wants to see Joe and Pip about Pip's apprenticeship as a blacksmith?* Responses will vary. She had hoped that Miss Havisham would do more for Pip and thereby raise her family's status. Also, she is envious and resentful of fact that Joe has been invited to Satis House.

9

**Characterization.** Pip's changing character is demonstrated by his feelings when he sees Joe dressing in Sunday clothes. Pip knows Joe will look ridiculous in his poorly fitting suit.

10

Simile. Description of Joe as a ruffled, open-mouthed bird effectively conveys Joe's shocked, confused state and Pip's embarrassment for him.

11

Why does Joe address all remarks to Pip? Joe is very uncomfortable in Miss Havisham's presence, and he prefers to speak through Pip whom he loves and trusts.

12

Pip is honest about his previous emotion. His tone is an indication that he regrets his earlier response to Joe.

13

Joe feels Miss Havisham's question does not require answer. He feels Pip should know he has never intended to be paid for Pip's care and training.

14

So accustomed to people fawning over her in hopes of getting her money, Miss Havisham immediately recognizes that Joe truly cares for Pip and is not interested in her money; she respects Joe for his integrity.

The forge was shut up for the day, and Joe inscribed in chalk upon the door (as it was his custom to do on the very rare occasions when he was not at work) the monosyllable HOUT,<sup>2</sup> accompanied by a sketch of an arrow supposed to be flying in the direction he had taken. When we came to Pumblechook's, my sister bounced in and left us. As it was almost noon, Joe and I held straight on to Miss Havisham's house. Estella opened the gate as usual, and led us the way that I knew so well.

Estella told me we were both to go in, so I took Joe by the coat cuff and conducted him into Miss Havisham's presence. She was seated at her dressing table, and looked round at us immediately.

"Oh!" said she to Joe. "You are the husband of the sister of this boy?"

I could barely have imagined dear old Joe looking so unlike himself or so like some extraordinary bird, standing, as he did, speechless, with his tuft of feathers ruffled, and his mouth open as if he wanted a worm.

"You are the husband," repeated Miss Havisham, "of the sister of this boy?"

It was very aggravating; but, throughout the interview, Joe persisted in addressing me instead of Miss Havisham. It was quite in vain for me to make him sensible that he ought to speak to Miss Havisham. The more I made faces and gestures to him to do it, the more confidential, argumentative, and polite he persisted in being to me.

"Have you brought his indentures with you?" asked Miss Havisham.

"Well, Pip, you know," replied Joe, as if that were a little unreasonable, "you yourself see me put 'em in my 'at, and therefore you know as they are here." With which he took them out, and gave them, not to Miss Havisham, but to me. I am afraid I was ashamed of the dear

good fellow—I *know* I was ashamed of him—when I saw that Estella stood at the back of Miss Havisham's chair, and that her eyes laughed mischievously. I took the indentures out of his hand and gave them to Miss Havisham.

"You expected," said Miss Havisham, as she looked them over, "no premium with the boy?"

"Joe!" I remonstrated; for he made no reply at all. "Why don't you answer——"

"Pip," returned Joe, cutting me short as if he were hurt, "which I mean to say that were not a question requiring an answer betwixt yourself and me, and which you know the answer to be full well 'No.' You know it to be 'No,' Pip, and wherefore should I say it?"

Miss Havisham glanced at him as if she understood what he really was, better than I had thought possible; and took up a little bag from the table beside her.

"Pip has earned a premium here," she said, "and here it is. There are five-and-twenty guineas<sup>3</sup> in this bag. Give it to your master, Pip."

Joe, even at this pass, persisted in addressing me. "This is very liberal on your part, Pip," said Joe, "and it is as such received and grateful welcome, though never looked for. And now, old chap," said Joe, "may you and me do our duty, both on us by one and another."

"Goodbye, Pip!" said Miss Havisham. "Let them out, Estella."

"Am I to come again, Miss Havisham?" I asked.

"No. Gargery is your master now. Gargery! One word!"

Thus calling him back as I went out of the door, I heard her say to Joe, in a distinct emphatic voice. "The boy has been a good boy here, and that is his reward. Of course, as an

3. **guinea** (gin'ē): a gold coin worth twenty-one shillings, a little more than five dollars in American money at that time.

2. **Hout**: out.

honest man, you will expect no other and no more.”

In another minute we were outside the gate, and it was locked, and Estella was gone. When **15** we stood in the daylight alone again, Joe backed up against a wall and said to me, “Astonishing!” And there he remained so long, saying “Astonishing” at intervals so often that I began to think his senses were never coming back. At length he prolonged his remark into, “Pip, I do assure you this is as-TON-ish-ing!” and so, by degrees, became conversational and able to walk away.

“Well!” cried my sister, addressing us both at once, when we arrived at Pumblechook’s. “I wonder you condescend to come back to such poor society as this, I am sure I do! And, what did she give young Rantipole<sup>4</sup> here?”

“She giv’ him,” said Joe, handing the bag to my sister, “five-and-twenty pound.”

“It’s five-and-twenty pound, mum,” echoed that basest of swindlers, Pumblechook, rising to shake hands with her; “and it’s no more than your merits (as I said when my opinion was asked), and I wish you joy of the money!”

“Goodness knows, Uncle Pumblechook,” said my sister (grasping the money), “we’re deeply beholden to you.”

**16** “Never mind me, mum,” returned that diabolical corn chandler. “A pleasure’s a pleasure all the world over. But this boy, you know; we must have him bound. I said I’d see to it—to tell you the truth.”

The justices were sitting in the town hall near at hand, and we at once went over to have me bound apprentice to Joe. I say we went over, but I was pushed over by Pumblechook, exactly as if I had that moment picked a pocket or fired a rick.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, it was the general impression in court that I had been taken red-

handed; for, as Pumblechook shoved me before him through the crowd, I heard some people say, “What’s he done?” and others, “He’s a young ‘un, too, but looks bad, don’t he?” One person of mild and benevolent aspect even gave me a tract entitled, TO BE READ IN MY CELL.

When we had come out again, we went back to Pumblechook’s. And there my sister became so excited by the twenty-five guineas that nothing would serve her but we must have a dinner at the Blue Boar, and that Mr. Pumblechook must go over in his chaise-cart and bring the Hubbles and Mr. Wopsle.

My only remembrances of the great festival are that they wouldn’t let me go to sleep, but whenever they saw me dropping off, woke me up and told me to enjoy myself and that when I got into my little bedroom, I was truly wretched, and had a strong conviction on me that I should never like Joe’s trade. I had liked it once, but once was not now.

**19** It is a most miserable thing to feel ashamed of home. Home had never been a very pleasant place to me, because of my sister’s temper. But Joe had sanctified it, and I believed in it. I had believed in the best parlor as a most elegant saloon;<sup>6</sup> I had believed in the kitchen as a chaste though not magnificent apartment; I had believed in the forge as the glowing road to manhood and independence. Within a single year all this was changed. Now, it was all coarse and common, and I would not have had Miss Havisham and Estella see it on any account.

How much of my ungracious condition of mind may have been my own fault, how much Miss Havisham’s, how much my sister’s, is now of no moment to me or anyone. The change was made in me; the thing was done. Well or ill done, it was done.

Once it had seemed to me that when I

**15**

Emphasis on emerging into daylight reinforces image of Satis House as a prison-tomb.

**16**

Uncle Pumblechook gloats while unjustly taking credit for Pip’s association with Miss Havisham.

**17**

*For what is Pip mistaken? A criminal.*

**18**

*Tract: religious pamphlet.*

**19**

**Conflict.** Pip’s despondency stems from shame and disappointment; his apprenticeship to Joe ends aspirations to higher status. Pip’s difficulty in accepting his situation creates internal conflict.

4. **Rantipole:** a wild and unruly person.

5. **fired a rick:** set fire to a haystack.

6. **saloon:** large room.



## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Although Pip is discontent with his apprenticeship as blacksmith, Biddy realizes that being a good blacksmith is an admirable calling in life. During the early nineteenth century, a blacksmith was a necessity for most communities. Ask students to research smithing, to assess how valuable a skill it was and the status of the trade now.

### Ideas for Writing

In this still, we see Pip swinging a large, heavy sledgehammer, a task that undoubtedly takes great strength and endurance. We can imagine him doing this day in, day out in the great heat of the forge. Nevertheless, students may not be familiar with other aspects of running a business, such as taking work orders, dealing with customers, or delivering completed jobs. Ask students to imagine Pip's day from beginning to end and write descriptions capturing details such as the identity of the person who ordered the piece Pip works on, the exact nature of the job, and the function of the piece. Students might want to depict Pip's conversation with the customer.



should at last roll up my shirt sleeves and go into the forge, Joe's 'prentice, I should be distinguished and happy. Now I only felt that I was dusty with the dust of the small coal, and that I had a weight upon my daily remembrance to which the anvil was a feather. There have been occasions in my later life when I have felt for a time as if a thick curtain had fallen on all its interest and romance, to shut me out from anything save dull endurance any

20 more. Never has that curtain dropped so heavy and blank, as when my way in life lay stretched out straight before me through the newly entered road of apprenticeship to Joe.

But I am glad to know that I never breathed a murmur to Joe while my indentures lasted. It is about the only thing I *am* glad to know of myself in that connection. It was not because I was faithful, but because Joe was faithful, that I never ran away and went for a soldier or a sailor. It was not because I had a strong sense of the virtue of industry, but because Joe had a strong sense of virtue of industry, that I

21 worked with tolerable zeal against the grain. It is not possible to know how far the influence of any amiable, honest-hearted, duty-doing man flies out into the world, but I know right well that any good that intermixed itself with my apprenticeship came of plain, contented Joe, and not of restless, aspiring, discontented me.

22 What I dreaded was that in some unlucky hour I, being at my grimmest and commonest, should lift up my eyes and see Estella looking in at one of the wooden windows of the forge. I was haunted by the fear that she would, sooner or later, find me out, with a black face and hands, doing the coarsest part of my work, and would exult over me and despise me. Often after dark, when I was pulling the bellows for Joe, I would fancy that I saw her just drawing her face away, and would believe that she had come at last.

After that, when we went in to supper, the place would have a more homely look than ever, and I would feel more ashamed of home than ever, in my own ungracious breast.

## Chapter 12

### *Introducing Orlick.*

As I was getting too big for Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt's room, my education under that preposterous female terminated; not, however, until Biddy had imparted to me everything she knew, from the little catalogue of prices to a comic song she had once bought for a half-penny. Although the only coherent part of the latter piece of literature was the opening lines,

When I went to Lunnon town, sirs,  
Too rul loo rul!

Too rul loo rul!

Wasn't I done very brown, sirs?

Too rul loo rul!

Too rul loo rul!

—still, in my desire to be wiser, I got this composition by heart with the utmost gravity. In my hunger for information, I made proposals to Mr. Wopsle to bestow some intellectual crumbs upon me; with which he kindly complied. As it turned out, however, that he only wanted me for a dramatic lay figure,<sup>1</sup> to be contradicted and embraced and wept over and

2 bullied and clutched and stabbed and knocked about in a variety of ways, I soon declined that course of instruction, though not until Mr. Wopsle in his poetic fury had severely mauled me.

Whatever I acquired, I tried to impart to Joe. This statement sounds so well that I can-

1. **lay figure:** a puppet or dummy; here used in its secondary meaning of an unimportant or servile person.

### 20

**Figurative language.** Pip once thought apprenticeship would make him happy. Now compares prospect to "curtain dropped so heavy and blank."

### 21

**Characterization.** Pip has changed attitude toward humble home and blacksmith trade; however, Joe, a **static character**, is consistently faithful to principles of honesty, hard work, and love for family.

### 22

**Why does Pip dread seeing Estella at the window?** Responses will vary. Estella, who has taught Pip to be ashamed of himself and his position in life, is the embodiment of Pip's unattainable dreams.

## Chapter 12

### 1

In his quest for learning, Pip seriously memorizes comic song. Such songs were printed on sheets of paper (broadsheets) and sold cheaply.

### 2

Instead of sharing any knowledge with Pip, Mr. Wopsle victimizes him with histrionics and exhortations. This was style of preaching and teaching Dickens recalled from childhood.

3

Pip once schooled Joe out of love. Pip now hopes to make Joe more presentable.

4

*In what way does Joe's remark prove he is much wiser than Pip assumes?* Joe seems to have great understanding of human nature; he foresees negative effects of Pip's visiting Miss Havisham.

5

Joe is teasing Pip; he is aware of the significance of Pip's slip of tongue.

6

**Alliteration.** Reader's first glimpse of Orlick is ominous. Repetition of initial s sounds in "swarthy," "strength," "slouch," and "sluice" creates hissing sound and suggests evil qualities.

3 not in my conscience let it pass unexplained. I wanted to make Joe less ignorant and common, that he might be worthier of my society and less open to Estella's reproach.

The old Battery out on the marshes was our place of study, and a broken slate and a short piece of slate pencil were our educational implements, to which Joe always added a pipe of tobacco. I never knew Joe to remember anything from one Sunday to another, or to acquire, under my tuition, any piece of information whatever. Yet he would smoke his pipe at the Battery with a far more sagacious air than anywhere else—even with a learned air—as if he considered himself to be advancing immensely. Dear fellow, I hope he did.

It was pleasant and quiet out there with the sails on the river. Whenever I watched the vessels standing out to sea with their white sails spread, I somehow thought of Miss Havisham and Estella. One Sunday I resolved to mention a thought concerning them that had been much in my head.

"Joe," said I, "don't you think I ought to pay Miss Havisham a visit?"

"Well, Pip," returned Joe, slowly considering. "What for?"

"What for, Joe? What is any visit made for?"

4 "There is some wisits p'r'aps," said Joe, "as forever remains open to the question, Pip. But in regard of wisiting Miss Havisham. She might think you wanted something—expected something of her."

I had thought of that too, and it was very far from comforting to me to find that he had thought of it; for it seemed to render it more probable.

"But, Joe."

"Yes, old chap."

"Here am I, getting on in the first year of my time, and since the day of my being bound I have never thanked Miss Havisham, or asked after her, or shown that I remember her."

"Well," said Joe, "if I was yourself, Pip, I wouldn't. No, I would *not*."

"But, Joe; what I wanted to say was, that as we are rather slack just now, if you would give me a half holiday tomorrow, I think I would go uptown and make a call on Miss Est—Havisham."

5 "Which her name," said Joe gravely, "ain't Eastavisham, Pip, unless she has been rechris'ened."

"I know, Joe. It was a slip. What do you think of it, Joe?"

In brief, Joe thought that if I thought well of it, he thought well of it. But he was particular in stipulating that if I were not received with cordiality, or if I were not encouraged to repeat my visit, as a visit which had no ulterior object, but was simply one of gratitude for a favor received, then this experimental trip should have no successor. By these conditions I promised to abide.

Now, Joe kept a journeyman<sup>2</sup> at weekly wages whose name was Orlick. He was a broad-shouldered, loose-limbed, swarthy fellow of great strength, never in a hurry, and always slouching. He never even seemed to come to his work on purpose, but would slouch in as if by mere accident. He lodged at a sluice keeper's<sup>3</sup> out on the marshes, and on working days would come slouching from his hermitage, with his hands in his pockets and his dinner loosely tied in a bundle round his neck and dangling on his back.

This morose journeyman had no liking for me. When I was very small and timid, he gave me to understand that the Devil lived in a black corner of the forge, and that he knew the fiend

2. **journeyman** (jūr'nē-mən): a person who has learned a trade and is no longer an apprentice, but who still works for a master craftsman.

3. **sluice** (slōōs) **keeper**: a person in charge of a gate that regulates the flow of water in a sluice, an artificial stream used for drainage and irrigation.



very well; also that it was necessary to make up the fire, once in seven years, with a live boy, and that I might consider myself fuel. When I became Joe's 'prentice, Orlick was perhaps confirmed in some suspicion that I should dis-

7 place him; howbeit he liked me still less.

Orlick was at work and present, next day, when I reminded Joe of my half holiday. He said nothing at the moment, for he and Joe had just got a piece of hot iron between them, and I was at the bellows; but by and by he said, leaning on his hammer:

"Now, master! Sure you're not a-going to favor only one of us. If Young Pip has a half holiday, do as much for Old Orlick." I suppose he was about five-and-twenty, but he usually spoke of himself as an ancient person.

"Why, what'll you do with a half holiday if you get it?" said Joe.

"What'll I do with it? What'll *he* do with it? I'll do as much with it as *him*," said Orlick.

8 "As to Pip, he's going uptown," said Joe.

"Well, then, as to Old Orlick, *he's* a-going uptown," retorted that worthy. "Two can go uptown. 'Tain't only one wot can go uptown."

"Don't lose your temper," said Joe.

"Shall if I like," growled Orlick. "Now, master! Come. No favoring in this shop. Be a man!"

9 "Then, as in general you stick to your work as well as most men," said Joe, "let it be a half holiday for all."

My sister had been standing silent in the yard, within hearing—she was a most unscrupulous spy and listener—and she instantly looked in at one of the windows.

"Like you, you fool!" said she to Joe, "giving holidays to great idle hulkers like that. You are a rich man, upon my life, to waste wages in that way. I wish *I* was his master!"

"You'd be everybody's master if you durst," retorted Orlick, with an ill-favored grin.

"Let her alone," said Joe.

10 "I'd be a match for all noodles and all rogues," returned my sister, beginning to work herself into a mighty rage. "And I couldn't be a match for the noodles without being a match for your master, who's the dunderheaded king of the noodles. And I couldn't be a match for the rogues without being a match for you, who are the meanest-looking and the worst rogue between this and France. Now!"

"You're a foul shrew, Mother Gargery," growled the journeyman. "If that makes a judge of rogues, you ought to be a good 'un."

"Let her alone, will you?" said Joe.

"What did you say?" cried my sister, beginning to scream. "What did you say? What did that fellow Orlick say to me, Pip? What did he call me, with my husband standing by? Oh! Oh! Oh!" Each of these exclamations was a shriek. "Oh! Hold me! Oh!"

11 "Ah-h-h!" growled the journeyman, between his teeth. "I'd hold you, if you was my wife. I'd hold you under the pump and choke it out of you."

"I tell you, let her alone," said Joe.

"Oh! To hear him!" cried my sister, with a clap of her hands and a scream together. "To hear the names he's giving me! That Orlick! In my own house! Me, a married woman! With my husband standing by! Oh! Oh!"

What could the wretched Joe do now but stand up to his journeyman? They went at one another like two giants. But if any man in that neighborhood could stand up long against Joe, I never saw the man. Orlick was very soon among the coal dust, and in no hurry to come out of it. Then Joe picked up my sister, who had dropped insensible at the window, and carried her into the house. Afterward came that calm and silence which succeed all uproars—and I went upstairs to dress.

When I came down again, I found Joe and Orlick sweeping up, without any other traces of discomposure than a slit in one of Orlick's

7

**Howbeit** is defined in modern dictionaries as "although" or "nevertheless." Dickens uses it to mean "however it may be."

8

"Uptown" has same meaning as phrase "the right side of the tracks." Joe's home may be considered to be "on the wrong side of the tracks."

9

**Characterization.** Consistently admirable, Joe deals fairly with Orlick.

10

**Conflict.** Confrontation between Mrs. Joe and Orlick begins another subplot; the tone of this encounter foreshadows Mrs. Joe's violent beating.

11

**In what way has Mrs. Joe met her match in the foul Orlick? How does their confrontation accentuate Orlick's personality?** Responses will vary. Mrs. Joe's shrewish personality is intimidating, but Orlick fears no one and nothing.

12

*What does Pip mean by "we think the feelings that are very serious in a man quite comical in a boy"? Pip is referring to strong emotions, such as love, which in adulthood are considered earnest and important; however, adults consider youngsters with such feelings amusing.*

13

Pip is nervous.

14

**Characterization.** Correctly assessing that Pip has come to see Estella, Miss Havisham reminds Pip of Estella's beauty and unavailability; she revels in the pain she causes Pip.

15

In Britain, streets with rows of shops are often called High Street.

16

**Mood.** Heavy, dark evening and "blur" of "turnpike lamp" prepare reader for foreboding appearance of Orlick and dialogue concerning escaped convicts.

17

**Metaphor.** Orlick uses figurative language to refer to convicts escaped from Hulks.

nostrils. A pot of beer had appeared from the Jolly Bargemen, and they were sharing it by turns in a peaceable manner. Joe followed me out into the road to say, as a parting observation that might do me good, "On the Ram-page, Pip, and off the Ram-page, Pip—such is life!"

- 12 With what absurd emotions (for, we think the feelings that are very serious in a man quite comical in a boy) I found myself again going to Miss Havisham's, matters little here. Nor, how  
13 I passed and repassed the gate many times before I could make up my mind to ring.

Miss Sarah Pocket came to the gate. No Estella.

"How, then? You here again?" said Miss Pocket. "What do you want?"

When I said that I only came to see how Miss Havisham was, Sarah let me in, and presently brought the sharp message that I was to "come up."

Everything was unchanged, and Miss Havisham was alone.

"Well!" said she, fixing her eyes upon me. "I hope you want nothing? You'll get nothing."

"No indeed, Miss Havisham. I only wanted you to know that I am doing very well in my apprenticeship, and am always much obliged to you."

"There, there!" with the old restless fingers. "Come now and then; come on your birthday. —Aye!" she cried suddenly, turning herself and her chair toward me. "You are looking round for Estella? Hey?"

I had been looking round—in fact, for Estella—and I stammered that I hoped she was well.

"Abroad," said Miss Havisham; "educating for a lady; far out of reach; prettier than ever; admired by all who see her. Do you feel that you have lost her?"

There was such a malignant enjoyment in her utterance of the last words, and she broke

into such a disagreeable laugh, that I was at a loss what to say. She spared me the trouble of considering, by dismissing me. When the gate was closed upon me, I felt more than ever dissatisfied with my home and with my trade and with everything.

- 15 As I was loitering along the High Street, looking at the shop windows and thinking what I would buy if I were a gentleman, who should come out of the bookshop but Mr. Wopsle. He insisted on my accompanying him to the Pumblechookian parlor. I made no great resistance; consequently, we turned into Pumblechook's just as the street and shops were lighting up.

It was a very dark night when I set out with

- 16 Mr. Wopsle on the walk home. Beyond town we found a heavy mist out, and it fell wet and thick. The turnpike lamp was a blur, and its rays looked solid substance on the fog. We were noticing this when we came upon a man, slouching under the lee of the turnpike house.

"Halloa!" we said, stopping. "Orlick there?"

"Ah!" he answered, slouching out. "I was standing by a minute on the chance of company."

"You are late," I remarked.

Orlick not unnaturally answered, "Well? And you're late."

"We have been," said Mr. Wopsle, "indulging, Mr. Orlick, in an intellectual evening."

Old Orlick growled, as if he had nothing to say about that, and we all went on together. I asked him presently whether he had been spending his half holiday up and down town?

"Yes," said he, "all of it. I come in behind yourself. I didn't see you, but I must have been pretty close behind you. By the bye, the guns is going again."

"At the Hulks?" said I.

- 17 "Aye! There's some of the birds flown from the cages. The guns have been going since

dark, about. You'll hear one presently."

In effect, we had not walked many yards further when the well-remembered boom came toward us, deadened by the mist.

**18** "A good night for cutting off in," said Orlick. "We'd be puzzled how to bring down a  
**19** jailbird on the wing tonight." Orlick, with his hands in his pockets, slouched heavily at my side. I thought he had been drinking, but he was not drunk.

Thus we came to the village. The way by which we approached it took us past the Three Jolly Bargemen, which we were surprised to find—it being eleven o'clock—in a state of commotion, with the door wide open, and lights scattered about. Mr. Wopsle dropped in to ask what was the matter (surmising that a convict had been taken), but came running out in a great hurry.

"There's something wrong," said he, without stopping, "up at your place, Pip. Run all!"

"What is it?" I asked, keeping up with him. So did Orlick, at my side.

"I can't quite understand. The house seems to have been violently entered when Joe Gargery was out. Supposed by convicts. Somebody has been attacked and hurt."

We were running too fast to admit of more being said, and we made no stop until we got into our kitchen. It was full of people; the whole village was there or in the yard, and there was a surgeon, and there was Joe, and there was a group of women, all on the floor in the midst of the kitchen. The unemployed bystanders drew back when they saw me, and so I became aware of my sister—lying without sense or movement on the bare boards where she had been knocked down by a tremendous blow on the back of the head, dealt by some unknown hand when her face was turned toward the fire—destined never to be on the Ram-page again, while she was the wife of Joe.

Joe had been at the Three Jolly Bargemen,

smoking his pipe, from a quarter after eight o'clock to a quarter before ten. While he was there, my sister had been seen standing at the kitchen door and had exchanged good night with a farm laborer going home. When Joe went home at five minutes before ten, he found her struck down on the floor, and promptly called in assistance.

Nothing had been taken away from any part of the house. But there was one remarkable piece of evidence on the spot. She had been struck with something blunt and heavy, on the head and spine; after the blows were dealt, something heavy had been thrown down at her with considerable violence, as she lay on her face. And on the ground beside her, when Joe picked her up, was a convict's leg iron which had been filed asunder.

**20** Now, Joe, examining this iron with a smith's eye, declared it to have been filed asunder some time ago. The hue and cry going off to the Hulks, and people coming thence to examine the iron, Joe's opinion was corroborated. They claimed to know for certain that that particular manacle had not been worn by either of two convicts who had escaped last night. Further, one of those two was already retaken, and had not freed himself of his iron.

Knowing what I knew, I believed the iron to be my convict's iron—the iron I had seen and heard him filing at, on the marshes—but my  
**21** mind did not accuse him of having put it to its latest use. For I believed one of two other persons to have become possessed of it, and to have turned it to this cruel account. Either  
**22** Orlick, or the strange man who had shown me the file.

Now, as to Orlick; he had gone to town exactly as he told us when we picked him up at the turnpike, he had been seen about town all the evening, he had been in several public houses, and he had come back with myself and Mr. Wopsle. There was nothing against him,

**18**

Orlick is stating that dense fog will help convicts escape.

**19**

**Dialect.** "Jailbird on the wing" refers to a convict on the run.

**20**

**Characterization.** Joe has specialized knowledge and is able to determine facts of crime. Joe is obviously intelligent and capable.

**21**

**Why does Pip quickly refuse to accuse his convict of crime?** Responses will vary. Convict's taking blame for theft of food, "clicking sound" when kindness rendered, and gift of money have left impression of man incapable of harming Pip or family. It has been so long since Pip's convict escaped that it seems unlikely he would still be in area.

**22**

**Suspense.** Suspenseful crime scene; reader is left eager to know who culprit is. Like Pip, reader speculates on guilt of Orlick or stranger in pub.



23

Mrs. Joe literally has had volatile disposition beaten out of her.

24

**Diction.** Cleverly chosen words create comical tone. "Conquered" and "fallen" are far more humorous than euphemism "passed away."

25

**Characterization.** Like Joe, Bidly is static character. She, too, remains true to her values and is consistently kind, helpful, and loving to Pip and Gargery household.

26

**Why was Pip disappointed when Mrs. Joe did not accuse Orlick of being attacker?** Pip dislikes Orlick, and he has suspected that he is a villain. Identity of attacker is still uncertain.

save the quarrel; and my sister had quarreled with him, and with everybody else about her, ten thousand times. As to the strange man: if he had come back for his two bank notes, there could have been no dispute about them, because my sister was fully prepared to restore them. Besides, there had been no altercation; the assailant had come in so silently and suddenly that she had been felled before she could look round.

The constables were about the house for a week or two. They took up several obviously wrong people, and they ran their heads very hard against wrong ideas, and persisted in trying to fit the circumstances to the ideas, instead of trying to extract the ideas from the circumstances.

Long after these constitutional powers had dispersed, my sister lay ill in bed. Her sight was disturbed, so that she saw objects multiplied; her hearing was greatly impaired; her memory also; and her speech was unintelligible. It was necessary to keep my slate always by her, that she might indicate in writing what she could not indicate in speech.

- 23 However, her temper was greatly improved, and she was patient. We were at a loss to find a suitable attendant for her, until a circumstance
- 24 happened conveniently to relieve us. Mr. Wopsle's great-aunt conquered a confirmed habit of living into which she had fallen,<sup>4</sup> and Bidly became part of our establishment.
- 25 Bidly came to us with a small speckled box containing the whole of her worldly effects and became a blessing to the household. Above all she was a blessing to Joe, for the dear old fellow was sadly cut up by the constant contemplation of the wreck of his wife. Bidly instantly taking the cleverest charge of her, Joe became able in some sort to appreciate the greater quiet of his life, and to get down to the Jolly

4. conquered . . . fallen: died.

Bargemen now and then for a change that did him good.

Bidly's first triumph in her new office was to solve a difficulty that had completely vanquished me. Again and again and again, my sister had traced upon the slate a character that looked like a curious T, and then with the utmost eagerness had called our attention to it as something she particularly wanted. I had in vain tried everything producible that began with a T, from tar to toast and tub. At length it had come into my head that the sign looked like a hammer, and on my lustily calling that word in my sister's ear, she had begun to hammer on the table and had expressed a qualified assent. Thereupon, I had brought in all our hammers, one after another, but without avail.

When my sister found that Bidly was very quick to understand her, this mysterious sign reappeared on the slate. Bidly looked thoughtfully at it, heard my explanation, looked thoughtfully at Joe (who was always represented on the slate by his initial letter), and ran into the forge, followed by Joe and me.

"Why, of course!" cried Bidly with an exultant face. "Don't you see? It's him!"

Orlick, without a doubt! She had lost his name, and could only signify him by his hammer. We told him why we wanted him to come into the kitchen, and he slowly laid down his hammer, wiped his brow with his arm, took another wipe at it with his apron, and came slouching out.

- I confess that I expected to see my sister de-
- 26 nounce him, and that I was disappointed by the different result. She manifested the greatest anxiety to be on good terms with him, was evidently much pleased by his being at length produced, and motioned that she would have him given something to drink. She watched his countenance as if she were particularly wishful

to be assured that he took kindly to his reception. After that, a day rarely passed without her drawing the hammer on her slate, and without Orlick's slouching in and standing doggedly before her, as if he knew no more than I did what to make of it.

## Chapter 13

*Pip opens his heart to Biddy.*

I now fell into a regular routine of apprenticeship life, which was varied, beyond the limits of the village and the marshes, by no more remarkable circumstance than the arrival of my birthday and my paying another visit to Miss Havisham. The interview lasted but a few minutes, and she gave me a guinea when I was going, and told me to come again on my next birthday. I may mention at once that this became an annual custom. I tried to decline taking the guinea on the first occasion, causing her to ask me angrily if I expected more. Then, and after that, I took it. So unchanging was the dull old house, it bewildered me, and under its influence I continued at heart to hate my trade and to be ashamed of home.

Imperceptibly I became conscious of a change in Biddy, however. Her shoes came up at the heel, her hair grew bright and neat, her hands were always clean. She was not beautiful—she was common, and could not be like Estella—but she was pleasant and wholesome and sweet-tempered. I observed to myself one evening that she had curiously thoughtful and attentive eyes; eyes that were very pretty and very good. I laid down my pen, and Biddy stopped in her needlework without laying it down.

"Biddy," said I, "how do you manage it? Either I am very stupid, or you are very clever."

"What is it that I manage? I don't know," returned Biddy, smiling.

She managed her whole domestic life, and wonderfully too; but I did not mean that, though that made what I did mean more surprising.

3 "How do you manage, Biddy," said I, "to learn everything that I learn, and always to keep up with me?" I was beginning to be rather vain of my knowledge, for I spent my birthday guineas on it and the greater part of my pocket money.

4 "I suppose I must catch it—like a cough," said Biddy quietly, and went on with her sewing.

"You are one of those, Biddy," said I, "who make the most of every chance. You never had a chance before you came here, and see how improved you are!"

5 Biddy looked at me for an instant and went on with her sewing. "I was your first teacher, though, wasn't I?" said she, as she sewed.

"Yes, Biddy," I observed, "you were my first teacher, and that at a time when we little thought of ever being together like this in this kitchen. I must consult you a little more, as I used to do. Let us have a quiet walk on the marshes next Sunday, Biddy, and a long chat."

My sister was never left alone now; and Joe more than readily undertook the care of her on that Sunday afternoon, and Biddy and I went out together. It was summertime and lovely weather. When we came to the riverside and sat down on the bank, I resolved that it was a good time and place for the admission of Biddy into my inner confidence.

"Biddy," said I, after binding her to secrecy, "I want to be a gentleman."

"Oh, I wouldn't, if I was you!" she returned.

## Chapter 13

1 Pip is a little older than most ninth-grade students.

2 Pip is just now noticing change in Biddy; he had taken her for granted.

3 **Characterization.** Pip is becoming snobbish and proud; he speaks to Biddy in condescending manner.

4 Biddy's reply is sarcastic, but Pip does not notice.

5 Throughout this dialogue, readers' attention is repeatedly drawn to Biddy's sewing. This detail reflects Biddy's demeanor during conversation: she is composed and domestic.

6 **How is this day on the marsh different from other marsh scenes? What is significant about this setting?** Previous marsh scenes with convicts were dark and gloomy. In contrast, lovely summer day is appropriate for scene with Biddy, who is stable and good.

7

Biddy's assessment is prophetic: Pip's quest to become gentleman will not turn out "right."

8

**Conflict.** Pip articulates his internal conflict: who he is versus who he wants to be. This conflict is central to plot of novel.

9

**Why is "you" italicized? What does the italicized word suggest about Pip?** Italics indicate that Pip emphasized word when speaking. Pip's manner of speaking is reminiscent of condescending way Jaggers, Estella, and Sarah Pocket speak to Pip at Satis House; parallel situation suggests Pip looks down on Biddy.

10

**Foil.** Biddy is indirectly compared to Estella. Pip's hair pulling, grief, and crying remind reader of scene in Miss Havisham's garden when Pip cried over Estella. Biddy's behavior in this situation contrasts with Estella's, thus highlighting both Estella's cruelty and coldness and Biddy's kindness and warmth.

7 "I don't think it would be right."

"Biddy," said I, with some severity, "I have particular reasons for wanting to be a gentleman."

"You know best, Pip; but don't you think you are happier as you are?"

"Biddy," I exclaimed impatiently, "I am not at all happy as I am. I am disgusted with my calling and with my life. Don't be absurd."

"Was I absurd?" said Biddy, quietly raising her eyebrows. "I am sorry for that; I didn't mean to be. I only want you to do well and be comfortable."

8 "Well, then, understand once for all that I never shall or can be comfortable—or anything but miserable—there, Biddy!—unless I can lead a very different sort of life from the life I lead now."

"That's a pity!" said Biddy, shaking her head with a sorrowful air.

"If I could have settled down," I said to Biddy, "I know it would have been much better for me. You and I and Joe would have wanted nothing then, and Joe and I would perhaps have gone partners when I was out of my time, and I might even have grown up to keep company with you. I should have been good

9 enough for you; shouldn't I, Biddy?"

Biddy sighed and returned for an answer, "Yes; I am not overparticular." It scarcely sounded flattering, but I knew she meant well.

"Instead of that, see how I am going on. Dissatisfied and uncomfortable, and—what would it signify to me, being coarse and common, if nobody had told me so!"

Biddy turned her face suddenly toward mine and looked attentively at me.

"It was neither a very true nor a very polite thing to say," she remarked. "Who said it?"

"The beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's, and she's more beautiful than anybody ever was, and I admire her dread-

fully, and I want to be a gentleman on her account."

"Do you want to be a gentleman to spite her or to gain her over?" Biddy quietly asked me, after a pause.

"I don't know," I moodily answered.

"Because if it is to spite her," Biddy pursued, "I should think—but you know best—that might be better and more independently done by caring nothing for her words. And if it is to gain her over, I should think—but you know best—she was not worth gaining over."

"It may be all quite true," said I to Biddy, "but I admire her dreadfully."

10 I turned over on my face when I came to that, and got a good grasp on the hair on each side of my head, and wrenched it well. Biddy was the wisest of girls, and she tried to reason no more with me. She put her hand, which was a comfortable hand though roughened by work, upon my hands and gently took them out of my hair. Then she softly patted my shoulder in a soothing way, while with my face upon my sleeve I cried a little—exactly as I had done in the brewery yard—and felt vaguely convinced that I was very much ill-used by somebody, or by everybody; I can't say which.

"I am glad of one thing," said Biddy, "and that is, that you have felt you could give me your confidence, Pip." So, with a quiet sigh for me, Biddy rose from the bank and said, with a fresh and pleasant change of voice, "Shall we walk a little farther or go home?"

"Biddy," I cried, getting up, putting my arm around her neck, and giving her a kiss, "I shall always tell you everything."

"Till you're a gentleman," said Biddy.

"You know I never shall be, so that's always. Not that I have any occasion to tell you anything, for you know everything I know—as I told you at home the other night."

"Ah!" said Biddy, quite in a whisper, and



then repeated, with her former pleasant change, "shall we walk a little farther or go home?"

We talked a good deal as we walked, and all that Bidly said seemed right. Bidly was never insulting, or capricious, or Bidly today and somebody else tomorrow; she would have derived only pain, and no pleasure, from giving me pain.

I began to consider whether I was not more naturally and wholesomely situated, after all, in these circumstances, than playing beggar my neighbor by candlelight in the room with the stopped clocks, and being despised by Estella. How could it be, then, that I did not like her much the better of the two?

"Bidly," said I, when we were walking homeward, "I wish you could put me right."

"I wish I could!" said Bidly.

**11** "If I could only get myself to fall in love with you—you don't mind my speaking so openly to such an old acquaintance?"

"Oh, dear, not at all!" said Bidly. "Don't mind me."

"If I could only get myself to do it, *that* would be the thing for me."

"But you never will, you see," said Bidly.

**12** When we came near the churchyard, we had to cross an embankment and get over a stile near a sluice gate. There started up, from the rushes, Old Orlick.

"Halloa!" he growled. "Where are you two going?"

"Where should we be going, but home?"

"Well, then," said he, "I'm jiggered if I don't see you home!"

Bidly said to me in a whisper, "Don't let him come; I don't like him." As I did not like him either, I took the liberty of saying that we thanked him, but we didn't want seeing home. He dropped back, but came slouching after us at a little distance.

Curious to know whether Bidly suspected

him of having had a hand in that murderous attack of which my sister had never been able to give any account, I asked her why she did not like him.

"Oh," she replied, glancing over her shoulder as he slouched after us, "because I—I am afraid he likes me!"

"Did he ever tell you he liked you?" I asked indignantly.

"No," said Bidly, glancing over her shoulder again, "he never told me so; but he dances at me whenever he can catch my eye."

**13** I kept an eye on Orlick after that night. He had struck root in Joe's establishment, by reason of my sister's sudden fancy for him, or I **14** should have tried to get him dismissed. He quite understood and reciprocated my good intentions, as I had reason to know thereafter.

And now my mind was confused. At times, I would decide that my disaffection to dear old Joe and the forge was gone, and that I was growing up in a fair way to be partners with Joe and to keep company with Bidly—when all in a moment some remembrance of the Havisham days would fall upon me and scatter my wits again. Scattered wits take a long time picking up; and often they would be dispersed in all directions by one stray thought, that perhaps after all Miss Havisham was going to make my fortune when my time was out.

**15** If my time had run out, it would have left me still at the height of my perplexities, I dare say. It never did run out, however, but was brought to a premature end, as I proceed to relate.

## Chapter 14

*Mr. Jaggers, a lawyer, brings astonishing news.*

**1** It was in the fourth year of my apprenticeship to Joe, and it was a Saturday night. There was a group assembled round the fire at the Three

**11**

**Irony.** Reader will later perceive ironic nature of this dialogue when Pip returns to village to propose to Bidly, only to discover she has married Joe.

**12**

**Stile:** set of steps used for climbing over wall or fence.

**13**

Apparently, Orlick flirts with Bidly.

**14**

**Suspense.** Dickens creates suspense by having Pip withhold information; however, reader can predict that Orlick and Pip will have confrontation, at which time Pip will learn that Orlick suspected Pip's intention to have him fired.

**15**

**What is Pip referring to when he speaks of his time running out? What can be predicted about Pip's near future?** Pip is referring to his apprenticeship to Joe. It can be predicted that some person or event will intervene and end his apprenticeship.

## Chapter 14

**1**

Pip is about eighteen years old.

2

Mr. Wopsle reads the newspaper aloud because most villagers are illiterate.

3

**Suspense.** Pip encounters another stranger in the Three Jolly Bargemen; episode is reminiscent of one in which he receives money from stranger connected with convict. Parallel nature of scenes arouses reader's curiosity.

4

**Characterization.** Jaggers, who will become key person in Pip's life, seems gruff and self-assured.

5

*What does Jaggers mean? What might be inferred about his attitude and personality?* Joe's religious convictions are not point of discussion. Reveals that Jaggers is professional, practical, businesslike.

6

Jaggers is first character to use phrase "Great Expectations." Plot of novel is built on Pip's ambitions, his "great expectations," and the conflicts they create.

Jolly Bargemen, attentive to Mr. Wopsle as he  
2 read the newspaper aloud. Of that group I was one.

3 I became aware of a strange gentleman leaning over the back of the settle opposite me, looking on. There was an expression of contempt on his face, and he bit the side of a great forefinger as he watched the group of faces.

"Well!" said the stranger to Mr. Wopsle, when the reading was done. "You have settled it all to your own satisfaction, I have no doubt?"

The strange gentleman, with an air of authority not to be disputed, and a manner expressive of knowing something secret about every one of us came into the space between the two settles, in front of the fire.

"From information I have received," said he, looking round at us as we all quailed before him, "I have reason to believe there is a blacksmith among you, by name Joseph—or Joe—Gargery. Which is the man?"

"Here is the man," said Joe.

The strange gentleman beckoned him out of his place, and Joe went.

"You have an apprentice," pursued the stranger, "commonly known as Pip? Is he here?"

"I am here!" I cried.

The stranger did not recognize me, but I recognized him as the gentleman I had met on the stairs on the occasion of my second visit to Miss Havisham. I had known him the moment I saw him looking over the settle. I checked off again in detail his large head, his dark complexion, his deep-set eyes, his bushy black eyebrows, his large watch chain, his strong black dots of beard and whisker, and even the smell of scented soap on his great hand.

"I wish to have a private conference with you two," said he, when he had surveyed me at his leisure. "It will take a little time. Perhaps we had better go to your place of residence."

Amidst a wondering silence, we three walked out of the Jolly Bargemen and in a wondering silence walked home. Joe went on ahead to open the front door. Our conference was held in the parlor, which was feebly lighted by one candle.

It began with the strange gentleman's sitting down at the table, drawing the candle to him, and looking over some entries in his pocket-book.

4 "My name," he said, "is Jaggers, and I am a lawyer in London. I am pretty well known. I have unusual business to transact with you, and I commence by explaining that it is not of my originating. If my advice had been asked, I should not have been here. It was not asked, and you see me here. What I have to do as the confidential agent of another, I do. No less, no more.

"Now, Joseph Gargery, I am the bearer of an offer to relieve you of this young fellow, your apprentice. You would not object to cancel his indentures at his request and for his good? You would want nothing for so doing?"

"Lord forbid that I should want anything for not standing in Pip's way," said Joe, staring.

5 "Lord forbidding is pious, but not to the purpose," returned Mr. Jaggers. "The question is, would you want anything? Do you want anything?"

"The answer is," returned Joe sternly, "no."

I thought Mr. Jaggers glanced at Joe, as if he considered him a fool for his disinterestedness. But I was too much bewildered between breathless curiosity and surprise to be sure of it.

"Very well," said Mr. Jaggers. "Now, I return to this young fellow. And the communication I have got to make is that he has Great Expectations."

Joe and I gasped and looked at one another.

"I am instructed to communicate to him," said Mr. Jaggers, throwing his finger at me sideways, "that he will come into a handsome property. Further, that it is the desire of the present possessor of that property that he be immediately removed from his present sphere of life and from this place and brought up as a gentleman—in a word, as a young fellow of great expectations."

7 My dream was out; my wild fancy was surpassed by sober reality; Miss Havisham was going to make my fortune on a grand scale.

"Now, Mr. Pip," pursued the lawyer, "I address the rest of what I have to say to you. You are to understand, first, that it is the request of the person from whom I take my instructions that you always bear the name of Pip. You will have no objection, I dare say, but if you have any objection, this is the time to mention it."

My heart was beating so fast, and there was such a singing in my ears, that I could scarcely stammer I had no objection.

8 "I should think not! Now you are to understand, secondly, Mr. Pip, that the name of the person who is your liberal benefactor remains a profound secret until the person chooses to reveal it at firsthand by word of mouth to yourself. When or where that intention may be carried out, no one can say. It may be years hence. It is not the least to the purpose what the reasons of this prohibition are; they may be the strongest and gravest reasons, or they may be a mere whim. This is not for you to inquire into. The condition is laid down. Your acceptance of it, and your observance of it as binding, is the only remaining condition that I am charged with by the person from whom I take my instructions. That person is the person from whom you derive your expectations, and the secret is solely held by that person and by me. If you have any objection to it, this is the time to mention it. Speak out."

Once more, I stammered that I had no objection.

9 "I should think not! Now, Mr. Pip, I have done with stipulations. We come next to mere details of arrangement. You must know that although I have used the term 'expectations' more than once, you are not endowed with expectations only. There is already lodged in my hands a sum of money amply sufficient for your suitable education and maintenance. You will please consider me your guardian.

"Oh!" for I was going to thank him. "I tell you at once, I am paid for my services, or I shouldn't render them. It is considered that you must be better educated, in accordance with your altered position."

I said I had always longed for it.

10 "Never mind what you have always longed for, Mr. Pip," he retorted. "Keep to the record. If you long for it now, that's enough. Am I answered that you are ready to be placed at once under some proper tutor? Is that it?"

I stammered yes, that was it.

"There is a certain tutor who I think might suit the purpose," said Mr. Jaggers. "The gentleman I speak of is one Mr. Matthew Pocket."

Ah! I caught at the name directly. Miss Havisham's relation. The Matthew whom Mr. and Mrs. Camilla had spoken of. The Matthew whose place was to be at Miss Havisham's head when she lay dead in her bride's dress on the bride's table.

"You know the name?" said Mr. Jaggers, looking shrewdly at me. "What do you say of it?"

I said that I was much obliged to him for his mention of Mr. Matthew Pocket, and that I would gladly try that gentleman.

"Good. You had better try him in his own house. The way shall be prepared for you, and you can see his son first, who is in London. When will you come to London?"

7 **Irony.** These words will take on ironic twist by end of story. At present, Pip believes his dream of gentility is about to become reality; later, his expectations will be sobered by life's realities. Also, Miss Havisham is not, as will be revealed, benefactor.

8 **Suspense.** Secret benefactor creates suspense; this mystery is key element of plot.

9 Use of formal, legalistic jargon indicative of Jaggers' profession, personality, and social class; language contrasts sharply with Joe's speech.

10 Jaggers' retort is similar in tone to earlier reply to Joe. While he directs Joe to stick to purpose, he directs Pip to "keep to record." Attests to his formal, businesslike personality and his disdain for members of Joe and Pip's class.



11

Purses were originally knitted pouches that were carried by men and women alike. They were usually fastened or drawn together by rings.

12

**Characterization.** Description attests to Joe's tenderness, gentleness, and true concern and love for Pip.

13

Pip interrupts his narrative to describe Joe from his current perspective.

14

Joe, normally a peaceful man, is obviously frustrated by Jaggers' refusal to accept his answer. Reader might also infer that forthcoming loss of Pip heightens his emotions.

15

**What does Jaggers mean by "the sooner you leave here, the better"?** Jaggers, obviously shaken by the confrontation with Joe, implies that such a place is unfit for a gentleman and that, if Pip is to fulfill his expectations, he must leave people such as Joe.

I said (glancing at Joe, who stood looking on, motionless) that I supposed I could come directly.

"First," said Mr. Jaggers, "you should have some new clothes to come in, and they should not be working clothes. Say this day week.<sup>1</sup> You'll want some money. Shall I leave you twenty guineas?"

11 He produced a long purse, with the greatest coolness, and counted them out on the table and pushed them over to me, and sat swinging his purse and eyeing Joe.

"Well, Joseph Gargery? You look dumfounded?"

"I am!" said Joe, in a very decided manner.

"It was understood that you wanted nothing for yourself, remember?"

"It were understood," said Joe. "And it are understood. And it ever will be similar according."

"But what," said Mr. Jaggers, swinging his purse, "what if it was in my instructions to make you a present, as compensation?"

"As compensation what for?" Joe demanded.

"For the loss of his services."

12 Joe laid his hand upon my shoulder with the touch of a woman. "Pip is that hearty welcome," said Joe, "to go free with his services, to honor and fortun', as no words can tell him. But if you think as money can make compensation to me for the loss of the little child—what come to the forge—and ever the best of friends!—"

13 Oh, dear good Joe, whom I was so ready to leave and so unthankful to, I see you again, with your muscular blacksmith's arm before your eyes, and your broad chest heaving, and your voice dying away.

But I encouraged Joe at the time. I begged Joe to be comforted, for (as he said) we had

ever been the best of friends, and (as I said) we ever would be so, Joe scooped his eyes with his wrist, but said not another word.

Mr. Jaggers had looked on at this, as one who recognized in Joe the village idiot, and in me his keeper. When it was over, he said, "Now, Joseph Gargery, I warn you this is your last chance. If you mean to take a present that I have in charge to make you, speak out, and you shall have it. If on the contrary you mean to say——" Here, to his great amazement, he was stopped by Joe's suddenly working round him with every demonstration of a pugilistic purpose.<sup>2</sup>

14 "Which I meanersay," cried Joe, "that if you come into my place bull-baiting and badgering me, come out! Which I meanersay as sech if you're a man, come on!"

I drew Joe away, and he immediately became placable. Mr. Jaggers backed near the door and there delivered his valedictory remarks:

15 "Well, Mr. Pip, I think the sooner you leave here, the better. Let it stand for this day week, and you shall receive my printed address in the meantime. You can take a hackney coach at the stagecoach office in London, and come straight to me."

Something came into my head which induced me to run after him.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Jaggers."

"Halloa!" said he. "What's the matter?"

"I wish to be quite right, Mr. Jaggers. Would there be any objection to my taking leave of anyone I know about here, before I go away?"

"No," said he, looking as if he hardly understood me.

"I don't mean the village only, but up-town?"

"No," said he. "No objection."

1. **this day week:** a week from today.

2. **pugilistic** (pyŏŏ'jə-lis'tik) **purpose:** intention of fighting.

I thanked him and ran home again, and there I found that Joe had already locked the front door and was seated by the kitchen fire with a hand on each knee, gazing intently at the burning coals. I too sat down before the fire and gazed at the coals, and nothing was said for a long time.

My sister was in her cushioned chair in her corner, and Biddy sat at her needlework before the fire, and Joe sat next to Biddy.

At length I got out, "Joe, have you told Biddy?"

"No, Pip," returned Joe, "I left it to yourself, Pip."

"I would rather you told, Joe."

"Pip's a gentleman of fortun', then," said Joe, "and God bless him in it!"

Biddy dropped her work and looked at me. Joe held his knees and looked at me. I looked at both of them. After a pause they both heartily congratulated me; but there was a certain

**16** touch of sadness in their congratulations that I rather resented.

I took it upon myself to impress Biddy (and through Biddy, Joe) with the grave obligation I considered my friends under, to know nothing and say nothing about the maker of my fortune. Biddy nodded her head thoughtfully at the fire and said she would be very particular; and Joe said, "Aye, aye, I'll be ekervally partickler, Pip," and then they congratulated me again, and went on to express so much wonder at the notion of my being a gentleman that I didn't half like it.

"Saturday night," said I, when we sat at our supper of bread-and-cheese and beer. "Five more days, and then the day before *the* day! They'll soon go."

"Yes, Pip," observed Joe, whose voice sounded hollow in his beer mug. "They'll soon go."

"I have been thinking, Joe, that when I go downtown on Monday and order my new

clothes, I shall tell the tailor that I'll come and put them on there, or that I'll have them sent to Mr. Pumblechook's. It would be very disagreeable to be stared at by all the people here."

"Mr. and Mrs. Hubble might like to see you in your new genteel figure, too, Pip," said Joe. "So might Wopsle. And the Jolly Bargemen might take it as a compliment."

**17** "That's just what I don't want, Joe. They would make such a business of it—such a coarse and common business—that I couldn't bear myself."

Biddy asked me here, "Have you thought about when you'll show yourself to Mr. Gargery, and your sister, and me? You will show yourself to us, won't you?"

"Biddy," I returned with some resentment, "you are so exceedingly quick that it's difficult to keep up with you. I shall bring my clothes here in a bundle one evening—most likely on the evening before I go away."

**18** Biddy said no more. Handsomely forgiving her, I soon exchanged an affectionate good night with her and Joe, and went up to bed. When I got into my little room, I sat down and took a long look at it, as a mean little room that I should soon be parted from and raised above forever.

As I put the window open and stood looking out, I saw Joe come slowly forth at the dark door below and take a turn or two in the air; and then I saw Biddy come and bring him a pipe and light it for him. He never smoked so late, and it seemed to hint to me that he wanted

**19** comforting, for some reason or other. I drew away from the window and sat down in my one chair by the bedside, feeling it very sorrowful and strange that this first night of my bright fortunes should be the loneliest I had ever known.

**20** I put my light out and crept into bed; and it was an uneasy bed now, and I never slept the old sound sleep in it any more.

## 16

Pip resents sadness in Joe's and Biddy's congratulations probably because he feels guilty about leaving them.

## 17

**Characterization.** Pip is already showing ugly side of his new status; he considers his neighbors "coarse and common."

## 18

**Why is it ironic that Pip "handsomely" forgives Biddy?** Ironic because it is Pip who has been rude and resentful.

## 19

Pip cannot understand that Joe and Biddy are sad over his departure and his changing manner.

## 20

Pip's "uneasy bed" suggests Pip's now "uneasy" life. He can no longer find happiness in his old way of life; he feels estranged, lonely, and discontented.

## Chapter 15

*Pip visits Trabb, the tailor, and has a brief encounter with Trabb's boy.*

Morning made a considerable difference in my general prospect of life. After breakfast, Joe brought out my indentures from the press in the best parlor, and we put them in the fire, and I felt that I was free.

1 After our early dinner, I strolled out alone. As I passed the church, I thought—with something akin to shame—of my companionship with the fugitive whom I had once seen limping among those graves. My comfort was that he had doubtless been transported a long way off, and that he was dead to me, and might be veritably<sup>1</sup> dead into the bargain. I made my 2 way to the old Battery, and, lying down there to consider the question whether Miss Havisham intended me for Estella, fell asleep.

When I awoke, I was much surprised to find Joe sitting beside me, smoking his pipe. He greeted me with a cheerful smile on my opening my eyes, and said:

"As being the last time, Pip, I thought I'd foller."

"And, Joe, I am very glad you did so."

"Thankee, Joe."

"You may be sure, dear Joe," I went on, after we had shaken hands, "that I shall never forget you."

"No, no, Pip!" said Joe, in a comfortable tone. "I'm sure of that. Aye, aye, old chap!"

"It's a pity now, Joe," said I, "that you did not get on a little more when we had our lessons here, isn't it?"

"Well, I don't know," returned Joe. "I'm so awful dull. I'm only master of my own trade. It were always a pity as I was so awful dull; but it's

no more of a pity now than it was—this day twelvemonth<sup>2</sup>—don't you see!"

3 What I had meant was that when I came into my property and was able to do something for Joe, it would have been much more agreeable if he had been better qualified for a rise in station. He was so perfectly innocent of my meaning, however, that I thought I would mention it to Biddy in preference.

So, when we had walked home and had had tea, I took Biddy into our little garden and said I had a favor to ask of her.

"And it is, Biddy," said I, "that you will not omit any opportunity of helping Joe on a little."

"How helping him on?" asked Biddy, with a steady sort of glance.

"Well! Joe is a dear good fellow—in fact, I think he is the dearest fellow that ever lived—but he is rather backward in some things. For instance, Biddy, in his learning and his manners."

4 "Oh, his manners! Won't his manners do, then?" asked Biddy, plucking a black-currant leaf.

"My dear Biddy, they do very well here——"

"Oh! they *do* very well here?" interrupted Biddy, looking closely at the leaf in her hand.

"Hear me out—but if I were to remove Joe into a higher sphere, as I shall hope to remove him when I fully come into my property, they would hardly do him justice."

"And don't you think he knows that?" asked Biddy.

5 It was such a provoking question (for it had never in the most distant manner occurred to me) that I said, snappishly, "Biddy, what do you mean?"

"Have you never considered that he may be proud?"

1. **veritably** (vēr'ə-tə-blē): actually.

2. **this day twelvemonth**: a year ago today.

## Chapter 15

1 **Foreshadowing.** Pip's speculation about convict is another hint to reader that convict is to play a major part in Pip's life.

2 **When else has Pip gone to the old Battery? What is significant about his return to this location?** Pip has gone to Battery to meet convict, to give Joe lessons, and to talk with Biddy. All episodes set here associated with important moments in Pip's development.

3 **Characterization.** In keeping with Dickens' theme that money changes people's attitudes toward others, Pip now finds fault with Joe.

4 Biddy is both clever and honest in her assessment of Pip's self-centered motives.

5 Pip is too self-centered to see, much less accept, how his actions are hurting those who love him.



"Proud?" I repeated, with disdainful emphasis.

"Oh! there are many kinds of pride," said Bidly, looking full at me and shaking her head; "pride is not all of one kind——"

"Well? What are you stopping for?" said I.

"Not all of one kind," resumed Bidly. "He may be too proud to let anyone take him out of a place that he is competent to fill, and fills well and with respect."

"Now, Bidly," said I, "I am very sorry to see 6 this in you. You are envious, Bidly, and grudging. You are dissatisfied on account of my rise in fortune, and you can't help showing it."

"If you have the heart to think so," returned Bidly, "say so. Say so over and over again, if you have the heart to think so."

"If you have the heart to be so, you mean, Bidly," said I, in a virtuous and superior tone. "Don't put it off upon me. I am extremely sorry to see this in you, Bidly. It's a—it's a bad side of human nature."

7 I walked away from Bidly, and Bidly went into the house, and I went out at the garden gate and took a dejected stroll until supper-time, again feeling it very sorrowful and strange that this, the second night of my bright fortunes, should be as lonely and unsatisfactory as the first.

But morning once more brightened my view, and I extended my clemency to Bidly, and we dropped the subject. Putting on the best clothes I had, I went into town as early as I could hope to find the shops open, and presented myself before Mr. Trabb, the tailor, who was having his breakfast in the parlor behind his shop, and who did not think it worth his while to come out to me, but called me in to him.

"Well!" said Mr. Trabb, in a hail-fellow-well-met kind of way. "How are you, and what can I do for you?"

"Mr. Trabb," said I, "it's an unpleasant thing

8 to have to mention, because it looks like boasting, but I have come into a handsome property."

A change passed over Mr. Trabb. He got up from the bedside and wiped his fingers on the tablecloth, exclaiming, "Lord bless my soul!"

"I am going up to my guardian in London," said I, casually drawing some guineas out of my pocket and looking at them, "and I want a fashionable suit of clothes to go in. I wish to pay for them," I added, "with ready money."

9 "My dear sir," said Mr. Trabb, "may I venture to congratulate you? Would you do me the favor of stepping into the shop?"

Mr. Trabb's boy was the most audacious boy in all that countryside. When I had entered, he was sweeping the shop, and he had sweetened

10 his labors by sweeping over me. He was still sweeping when I came out into the shop with Mr. Trabb, and he knocked the broom against all possible corners and obstacles, to express equality with any blacksmith, alive or dead.

"Hold that noise," said Mr. Trabb with the greatest sternness, "or I'll knock your head off! Do me the favor to be seated, sir. Now," said Mr. Trabb, taking down a roll of cloth.

I selected the materials for a suit, and reentered the parlor to be measured. When he had at last done and had appointed to send the articles to Mr. Pumblechook's, he said, "I know, sir, that London gentlemen cannot be expected to patronize local work, as a rule; but if you would give me a turn now and then, I should greatly esteem it. Good morning, sir, much obliged.—Door!"

The last word was flung at the boy, who had 11 not the least notion what it meant. But I saw him collapse as his master rubbed me out with his hands, and my first decided experience of the stupendous power of money was that it had morally laid upon his back Trabb's boy.

After this memorable event I went to the hatter's, and the bootmaker's, and the hosier's,

6  
*Is it true, as Pip states, that Bidly is "envious" and "grudging"? No. She is same honest, generous, and loyal friend she has always been. Pip has become vain and foolish.*

7  
**Foreshadowing.** Second consecutive lonely and unsatisfactory night suggests to reader that pattern will continue.

8  
Pip is being anything but humble and enjoys boasting about his new-found wealth.

9  
Amusing changes come over Mr. Trabb when he learns that Pip is now a prosperous customer.

10  
Trabb's boy is not impressed with Pip.

11  
**Characterization.** Pip revels in powerful effect his money has had on Mr. Trabb and Trabb's boy.

12

Pumblechook, who previously treated Pip poorly, now plays up to him.

13

**Characterization.** Pip, who despised Pumblechook before, now changes his attitude about him. Pumblechook has not really changed; instead, Pip has changed, becoming more like Pumblechook.

14

**Foreshadowing.** Pip's expectations about his new clothes and fact that he is disappointed with them hints at future disappointments.

15

**How is Miss Havisham's room lighted?** The phrase "lighted as yore" means "lighted as it was in the past." Room is dark, lighted only with a few candles.

16

Pip is so convinced Miss Havisham is benefactor that he interprets, incorrectly, her every move and word as evidence of her generosity.

and felt rather like Mother Hubbard's dog whose outfit required the services of so many trades. I also went to the coach office and took my place for seven o'clock on Saturday morning. When I had ordered everything I wanted, I directed my steps toward Pumblechook's, and, as I approached that gentleman's place of business, I saw him standing at his door.

He was waiting for me with great impatience. He had been out early with the chaise-cart, and had called at the forge and heard the news. He had prepared a collation<sup>3</sup> for me in the parlor, and he too ordered his shopman to "come out of the gangway" as my sacred person passed.

12 "To think," said Mr. Pumblechook, after snorting admiration at me for some moments, "that I should have been the humble instrument of leading up to this, is a proud reward."

I begged Mr. Pumblechook to remember that nothing was to be ever said or hinted on that point. I mentioned that I wished to have my new clothes sent to his house, and he was ecstatic on my so distinguishing him. I mentioned my reason for desiring to avoid observation in the village, and he lauded it to the skies. There was nobody but himself, he intimated, worthy of my confidence. Then he asked me tenderly if I remembered our boyish games at sums, and how we had gone together to have me bound apprentice, and, in effect, how he had ever been my favorite fancy and my chosen friend. If I had taken ten times as many glasses of wine, I should have known that he never stood in that relation to me, and should in my heart of hearts have repudiated the idea.

13 Yet for all that, I remember feeling convinced that I had been much mistaken in him, and that he was a sensible, practical, good-hearted, prime fellow.

3. **collation** (kə-lā'shən): a light meal, usually served cold.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday passed, and on Friday morning I went to Mr. Pumblechook's to put on my new clothes and 14 pay my visit to Miss Havisham. My clothes were rather a disappointment, of course. Probably every new and eagerly expected garment ever put on fell a trifle short of the wearer's expectation. But after I had had my new suit on some half an hour, it seemed to fit me better.

I went to Miss Havisham's by all the back ways, and rang at the bell. Sarah Pocket came to the gate and positively reeled back when she saw me so changed.

"You?" said she. "You? Good gracious! What do you want?"

"I am going to London, Miss Pocket," said I, "and want to say goodbye to Miss Havisham."

I was not expected, for she left me locked in the yard while she went to ask if I were to be admitted. After a very short delay, she returned and took me up, staring at me all the way.

Miss Havisham was taking exercise in the room with the long spread table, leaning on 15 her crutch stick. The room was lighted as of yore, and at the sound of our entrance, she stopped and turned. She was then just abreast of the rotted bride cake.

"Don't go, Sarah," she said. "Well, Pip?"

"I start for London, Miss Havisham, tomorrow." I was exceedingly careful what I said. "And I thought you would kindly not mind my taking leave of you."

"This is a gay figure, Pip," said she, making her crutch stick play round me, as if she, the 16 fairy godmother who had changed me, were bestowing the finishing gift.

"I have come into such good fortune since I saw you last, Miss Havisham," I murmured. "And I am so grateful for it, Miss Havisham!"

"Aye, aye!" said she, looking at the envious

Sarah with delight. "I have seen Mr. Jaggers. I have heard about it, Pip. So you go tomorrow?"

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

17 "And are you adopted by a rich person?"

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

"Not named?"

"No, Miss Havisham."

"And Mr. Jaggers is made your guardian?"

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

She quite gloated on these questions and answers, so keen was her enjoyment of Sarah Pocket's jealous dismay. "Well!" she went on, "You have a promising career before you. Be good—deserve it—and abide by Mr. Jaggers' instructions." She looked at me, and looked at Sarah, and Sarah's countenance wrung out of her watchful face a cruel smile. "Goodbye, Pip!—you will always keep the name of Pip, you know."

"Yes, Miss Havisham."

"Goodbye, Pip!"

18 She stretched out her hand, and I went down on my knee and put it to my lips. I had not considered how I should take leave of her; it came naturally to me at the moment to do this. She looked at Sarah Pocket with triumph in her weird eyes, and so I left my fairy godmother, with both her hands on her crutch stick, standing in the midst of the dimly lighted room beside the rotten bride cake that was hidden in cobwebs.

And now, those six days which were to have run out so slowly had run out fast and were gone, and tomorrow looked me in the face more steadily than I could look at it. As the six evenings had dwindled away, I had become more and more appreciative of the society of Joe and Biddy. On this last evening, I dressed myself out in my new clothes for their delight 21 and sat in my splendor until bedtime. We had a hot supper on the occasion, graced by the inevitable roast fowl. We were all very low, and

none the higher for pretending to be in spirits.

I was to leave our village at five in the morning, and I had told Joe that I wished to walk away all alone. I am afraid that this purpose originated in my sense of the contrast there would be between me and Joe if we went to the coach together. I had pretended with myself that there was nothing of this taint in the arrangement; but when I went up to my little room on this last night, I felt compelled to admit that it might be so, and had an impulse upon me to go down again and entreat Joe to walk with me in the morning. I did not.

It was a hurried breakfast with no taste in it. I got up from the meal, saying with a sort of briskness, as if it had only just occurred to me, "Well! I suppose I must be off!" and then I kissed my sister, who was nodding and shaking in her usual chair, and kissed Biddy, and threw my arms around Joe's neck. The last I saw of them was when dear old Joe waved his strong right arm above his head, crying huskily, "Hoo-roar!" and Biddy put her apron to her face.

I walked away at a good pace, thinking it was easier to go than I had supposed it would be. The village was very peaceful and quiet, and all beyond was so unknown and great that in a moment with a strong heave and sob I broke into tears. I was better after I had cried than before—more sorry, more aware of my own ingratitude, more gentle. If I had cried before, I should have had Joe with me then.

When I was on the coach, and it was clear of the town, I deliberated with an aching heart whether I would not get down when we changed horses and walk back, and have another evening at home, and a better parting.

We changed, and I had not made up my mind, and still reflected for my comfort that it would be quite practicable to get down and walk back, when we changed again. We

17

*What effect does this line of questioning have on Pip? Pip sees questions as evidence that she is his benefactor.*

18

Miss Havisham's comment echoes one of the conditions of his "expectations," offering Pip even more evidence that she is benefactor. This echo complicates the plot, leading some readers to believe Pip is right.

19

*Characterization.* Pip's position, down on one knee to kiss Miss Havisham's hand, creates image of knight leaving on heroic quest. Pip has grandiose "expectations."

20

Pip, in his new clothes, does not want to be seen saying goodbye to a blacksmith.

21

As Pip "changes" coaches and nears London, he also "changes"; he cannot listen to heart and return home.



### READING CHECK

1. Food and file (p. 670).
2. Guns on Hulks are fired (p. 673).
3. They need blacksmith to fix lock on handcuffs (p. 679).
4. Through Pumblechook (p. 686).
5. Miss Havisham's mansion (p. 688).
6. Biddy (p. 695).
7. Stranger gives Pip money (p. 697).
8. She is impressed when Pip wins fight with pale boy (p. 702).
9. Orlick thinks Pip will take his job; senses Pip would like to see him dismissed (pp. 711–717).
10. He must not try to learn benefactor's identity; he must keep the name Pip (p. 719).

### FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Settings and characters include the following: *forge*—Joe Gargery, Mrs. Joe, Biddy, Wopsle, Uncle Pumblechook, Mr. Hubble, Mrs. Hubble, Wopsle's great-aunt, Orlick, Trabb, Trabb's boy; *marsh*—Pip's convict, second convict, sergeant and soldiers, stranger; *Satis House*—Miss Havisham, Estella, Camilla, Cousin Raymond, Sarah Picket, Georgiana, Jaggers, pale young gentleman. See *Teacher's Manual* for characterizations.
2. Pip is basically honest; conscience bothers him.
- 3a. First convict speaks to Pip and shows concern; second merely swears at Pip. 3b. To protect Pip. 3c. He wants to return kindness.
- 4a. She works hard, nags, beats Pip and Joe. 4b. She resents rearing Pip.
5. He is ashamed of his life and of himself.

changed again, and yet again, and it was now too late, and too far to go back, and I went on. And the mists had all solemnly risen now, and the world lay spread before me.

*This Is the End of the First Stage of Pip's Expectations.*

### Reading Check

1. What two things does the convict make Pip promise to bring to the Battery?
2. What signal is used to indicate that convicts have escaped from prison ships?
3. Why do soldiers come to the Gargery home?
4. How does Miss Havisham hear of Pip?
5. What is Satis House?
6. Who assists Pip in his lessons?
7. What happens to Pip at the Three Jolly Bargemen?
8. Why does Estella allow Pip to kiss her?
9. What two reasons does Orlick have for disliking Pip?
10. What are the two conditions Pip must agree to when Mr. Jaggers brings news of his great expectations?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Novel

#### Characters

1. In the first stage of his expectations, Pip is involved in events in three very different “worlds”: the forge, the marsh, and the strange mansion of Miss Havisham. Make a list of the main characters in each of these “worlds” and identify each one in a sentence or two.

2. What do you learn about Pip from his encounters with the convict on the marsh? Is Pip generous? Is he honest? Does he feel sympathy for those who are less fortunate than he is? Explain.

3a. When Pip encounters each of the two convicts, the first one frightens him, and the second is frightened by him. Despite this, Pip likes the first convict better. Why? b. Why does the first convict tell the sergeant he stole the food Pip brought him? c. What does this show about his feelings toward Pip?

4a. What impression do you receive of “Mrs. Joe” from Pip's description of her? b. Why do you think she treats Pip so harshly?

5. Pip's opinion of himself, his home, and his family changes after his first visit to Miss Havisham's mansion. What is the inner conflict that results from Pip's exposure to Miss Havisham and Estella?

6. Miss Havisham is one of Dickens' great eccentric characters. a. From the objects in her rooms and the things she says about them, what can you infer about her past? b. What do you think is her purpose in sending for Pip? c. What kind of feelings does she seem to enjoy arousing in other people? d. Why do you think she takes pleasure in doing this?

7a. What are Joe's feelings toward Pip? b. When Mr. Jaggers offers Joe money for releasing Pip from his apprenticeship, how does Joe react? c. What does his reaction show about his attitude toward life?

8. The nature of Pip's relationship with Joe is one of the important threads in the novel. Consider this relationship during the first part of the novel. a. How does Pip's attitude toward Joe change? b. What does this change reveal about Pip's character?

9. Compare Biddy and Estella. a. How are they different? b. How does each one influence Pip? c. Why does Pip choose Estella over Biddy?

10a. What do Mrs. Joe and Mr. Pumblechook expect that Miss Havisham will do for Pip? b. From what you know of Miss Havisham and her attitude toward people, do you think these expectations are realistic and reasonable or foolish and unfounded? Why?

11. Compare the Pip of the first few chapters with the Pip who leaves for London. How has he developed and changed?

#### Plot

12. The plot of the novel is built around Pip's "great expectations." a. What is the meaning of this phrase? b. Who first uses it in the novel? c. What facts and circumstances lead Pip to believe that the source of his "great expectations" is Miss Havisham?

13. *Great Expectations* was first published in weekly installments in a magazine, which was edited by Dickens, called *All the Year Round*. To keep people interested in the story—and eager to buy the next issue of the magazine—Dickens made skillful use of mystery and suspense. Look back at the chapter endings in Stage 1 and note how often many of them arouse your curiosity about what will happen next. At the end of Stage 1, several questions have been left unanswered, such as "Who was the pale young gentleman?" and "Who attacked Mrs. Joe?" What are some other unanswered questions?

14. In *Great Expectations*, as in many novels, there is a main plot and several subplots. The main plot focuses on how Pip grows and changes. The subplots are skillfully interwoven with this main plot. The story of the convicts in the marsh is one of the subplots. At first, the convicts seem to be only a passing episode in Pip's life. But the appearance of the man with the file, who gives Pip two one-pound notes, suggests that we will hear more about the convicts. What other subplots has Dickens connected with Pip's story in the first part of the novel?

15. Throughout the novel, Dickens deliberately introduces some comic scenes to lighten the tone of the narrative. What makes the Christmas dinner with Uncle Pumblechook such a funny scene?

6a. She has been bitter recluse because her bridegroom deserted her. 6b. She wants to see Estella break a boy's heart. 6c. She likes to be pitied; she likes to hurt others. 6d. She is selfish and bitter; seeks revenge.

7a. He truly loves Pip. 7b. He allows Pip to go, does not want compensation for him. 7c. He values friendships above money.

8a. Pip first loves and admires Joe. Later Pip is ashamed of Joe because Joe is not educated or a gentleman. 8b. Pip is immature and impressionable.

9a. Biddy is perceptive and kind; Estella is shallow and cruel. 9b. Biddy builds Pip's confidence; Estella tears it down. 9c. Pip admires her beauty and social status.

10a. Mrs. Joe thinks Pip will get property; Pumblechook thinks he will get apprenticeship. 10b. Foolish; Miss Havisham is selfish not giving.

11. He has changed from timid, innocent child to proud, determined young man; has become snobbish.

12a. A "handsome property" and a gentleman's upbringing for Pip. 12b. Jaggers. 12c. Jaggers brings news; Miss Havisham doesn't deny it; Pip has dreamed of it.

13. Who is Pip's benefactor? What will happen in London? Will Pip see Estella again?

14. Biddy and her grandmother; Biddy and the Gargerys; Miss Havisham and Estella; Miss Havisham's relatives; Mrs. Joe and Orlick.

15. Pumblechook's name, appearance, and snobbery; his drinking of the tar-water; Pip's and Joe's ridiculous Sunday clothes.

16a. Graveyard is bleak and lonely. 16b. Rushing wind; convict is "fearful man" wearing leg iron, broken shoes, old rag around his head. He limps, shivers, glares, growls, and has chattering teeth.

17a. Sorrow, loneliness, fear, mystery, cruelty, anxiety. 17b. Forge is strength, warmth; Satis House is dark, unfriendly.

18a. As adult, Pip realizes his neglect of Joe and feels guilty.

18b. Pip was patronizing towards Biddy; later he realizes she was right, and he was wrong. 18c. Thinks she is pretty and desires her for many years.

19. Episodes that show different characters' attitudes toward money include these: Mrs. Joe's confiscation of Pip's money; excitement of Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook at prospect of Pip's employment by Miss Havisham; Miss Havisham's hopeful relatives visit on her birthday; Joe's reaction to Jaggers' assumption that Joe will expect compensation for loss of Pip's services; Pumblechook's changed attitude. Attitude of Joe and Biddy contrasts with attitudes of other characters. Additional examples can be found in *Teacher's Manual*.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Journeyman playwright*: a person who has completed education and training and is ready to try to write a play; *master architect*: an experienced architect who is renowned for his/her work.

## Setting

16. The action of the story begins very dramatically with Pip's encounter with the convict in the graveyard. a. How does the setting in the graveyard add to the excitement and suspense of this scene? b. Which details of the setting and of the convict's appearance are especially effective in creating an atmosphere of mystery and terror?

17. Throughout the novel, the atmosphere of the marshes suggests loneliness and gloom.

a. What might Dickens have intended the atmosphere of the marshes to symbolize? b. What other settings are associated with a specific mood? c. What influence on Pip do you think is symbolized by each?

## Point of View

18. *Great Expectations* is told from the first-person point of view. We are able to share Pip's reactions to the other characters and everything they do. We also have Pip's insights into his own actions and thoughts from the vantage point of an adult looking back at his early life.

a. How does Pip judge his own behavior toward Joe? b. Toward Biddy? c. Toward Estella?

## Theme

19. Pip is quick to notice that some people treat him differently the minute they learn he has come into money. Mr. Pumblechook, Trabb the tailor, and Trabb's foolish boy—who seems to be the village clown—are among the first to alter their manner toward Pip. That money has power to change people's attitudes toward one another was a favorite subject of Dickens'. Tell how he develops this theme in the early part of *Great Expectations*. Choose several episodes from Stage 1 that illustrate different characters' attitudes toward money. Or, if you wish, focus on two characters whose attitudes are strikingly different.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Learning Word Histories

As a blacksmith, Joe has two helpers, Pip and Orlick. They are his *apprentice* and his *journeyman*, respectively, and Joe is their *master*. In the England of Pip's day, a boy's apprenticeship (or period of training) had to be paid for. A legal contract called his *indentures* provided that his master be paid a certain sum, in return for which the boy received his room and board and training in the master's craft or trade.

Then, as now, a journeyman was a worker who had completed the term of apprenticeship. A master was an experienced worker who was capable of doing work of the highest quality.

We still use these old terms and titles. A *master* plumber is the person you would want to install a new sink, and you would probably not choose an *apprentice* carpenter to build your furniture. We also use such expressions as "journeyman playwright" and "master architect." What do these expressions mean?



## CLOSURE

Ask students to explain what Pip is like at the beginning of Stage 1, what he is like at the end of the stage, and how other characters and events contribute to his change. Have them cite passages to support responses.

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students draw sketches or paint portraits of characters from Stage 1 for a bulletin-board display or a portfolio. Ask them to accompany each portrait with an appropriate quotation.

Students might notice that Pip is treated

roughly by his elders, except for Joe. Does Pip's life reflect typical treatment of children during the nineteenth century? Have students research and write reports on the condition of children's lives during Pip's time.

## Writing About Literature

### ► Analyzing Methods of Characterization

Although the characters in a novel are more fully developed than those in a short story, the techniques for revealing character are the same in both forms of fiction. The author may comment directly on a character or use several means of indirect characterization: through description; through words, actions, and thoughts; through the reactions of other characters. Authors frequently use both direct and indirect characterization.

In direct characterization, the author summarizes a character's traits. In this passage, Dickens tells us directly the kind of person Joe is:

He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easygoing, foolish, dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness.

In indirect characterization, the author implies what a character is like. Dickens gives us insight into Mr. Pumblechook's character when he tells us that at breakfast, Mr. Pumblechook gave Pip "as much crumb as possible in combination with as little butter." Dickens does not say directly that Mr. Pumblechook is stingy, but we can infer this trait from his actions.

Choose one of the characters introduced in Stage 1 of the novel and write a composition showing how Dickens reveals that character through direct and indirect characterization.

## Looking Ahead to Stage 2

In many ways the problems that Pip faces are much like those a young man or woman might face today. In Stage 1 he has already begun to change under the pressures of the world around him. Do you think Pip is satisfied with the change in his life and his new expectations? Will he become a "gentleman" and win Estella as his love? Will he renew his bonds with Joe and Biddy? What do you think lies ahead for Pip in London?

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

You might assign a character sketch using both kinds of characterization. Characters particularly suitable for this sort of treatment include Joe, Orlick, Miss Havisham, and Pip's convict.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO STAGE 2

Students can base their answers on the events and personalities presented in Stage 1.

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to analyze characters from Stage 1 who are prominent in Stage 2, noting the development in their personalities and relationships. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 777 contains exercises on differentiating word meanings, identifying synonyms, and identifying archaic words.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask students to describe how they might change if they suddenly received a lot of money or moved to a new place. Explain that Pip changes because of his new life. What other events might cause one to change drastically?

# The Second Stage of Pip's Expectations

## Chapter 16

*Pip meets Wemmick, Mr. Jaggers' clerk, and Herbert Pocket.*

The journey from our town to the metropolis was a journey of about five hours. It was a little past midday when the four-horse stagecoach by which I was a passenger got into the ravel of traffic frayed out about the Cross Keys, Wood Street, Cheapside, London. We Britons had at that time particularly settled that it was treasonable to doubt our having and our being the best of everything; otherwise, while I was scared by the immensity of London, I think I might have had some faint doubts whether it was not rather ugly, crooked, narrow, and dirty.

Mr. Jaggers had duly sent me his address: it was Little Britain. A hackney coachman packed me up in his coach and hemmed me in with a folding and jingling barrier of steps, as if he were going to take me fifty miles. I had scarcely had time to enjoy the coach when I observed the coachman beginning to get down, as if we were going to stop presently. And stop we presently did, in a gloomy street, at certain offices with an open door, whereon was painted MR. JAGGERS.

I went into the front office and asked was Mr. Jaggers at home?

"He is not," returned the clerk. "He is in court at present. Am I addressing Mr. Pip?"

I signified that he was addressing Mr. Pip.

"Mr. Jaggers left word would you wait in his room. He couldn't say how long he might be, having a case on. But it stands to reason, his time being valuable, that he won't be longer than he can help."

With those words, the clerk opened a door

and ushered me into an inner chamber at the back. Mr. Jaggers' room was lighted by a skylight only, and was a most dismal place. I sat wondering and waiting in Mr. Jaggers' close room, until I really could not bear it and got up and went out.

I told the clerk that I would take a turn in the air while I waited, and turned into a street where I saw the great black dome of Saint Paul's<sup>1</sup> bulging at me from behind a grim stone building which a bystander said was Newgate Prison. Following the wall of the jail, I found the roadway covered with straw to deaden the noise of passing vehicles; and from this and from the quantity of people standing about smelling strongly of spirits and beer, I inferred that the trials were on.

I dropped into the office to ask if Mr. Jaggers had come in yet, and I found he had not, and I strolled out again. I became aware that other people were waiting about for Mr. Jaggers, as well as I. There were two men of secret appearance lounging in Bartholemew Close, one of whom said to the other when they first passed me that "Jaggers would do it if it was to be done." There was a knot of three men and two women standing at a corner, and one of the women was crying on her dirty shawl, and the other comforted her by saying as she pulled her own shawl over her shoulders, "Jaggers is for him, 'Melia, and what more *could* you have?" These testimonies to the popularity of my guardian made a deep impression on me, and I admired and wondered more than ever.

At length I saw Mr. Jaggers coming across the road toward me. All the others who were waiting saw him at the same time, and there was quite a rush at him. Mr. Jaggers addressed himself to his followers.

First, he took the two secret men.

1. **Saint Paul's**: a famous church designed by the English architect Christopher Wren (1632–1723).

\*For additional teaching materials related to this stage, see the *Teacher's Literature Companion*: Study Guide 86 / Selection Test 49 / Reading Check 47 / Vocabulary Tests 34 and 35 / Vocabulary Development Worksheet 60

## Chapter 16

**1 Setting.** England's cities, and especially London, were often "ugly" and "dirty." The few rich lived well; the many poor crowded the streets.

**2 Hackney coachman:** person who drives a horse-drawn carriage for hire; nineteenth-century equivalent of taxi driver.

**3 What kind of attitude do these people seem to have about the law? How do we know?** They view trials as an entertainment. Trials are used as an occasion for drinking.

**4 Suspense.** Snippets of conversation that Pip hears are only enough to excite his curiosity without giving any real information.

**5 Secret:** mysterious.

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Pip embarks for London and his great expectations, but he does not feel as happy as he might. His last evening with Joe and Biddy has left him with the realization that he is not behaving well toward them. However, these feelings do not

deter him from his quest to become a gentleman worthy of Estella. After he has been in London for a time, Joe brings a message from Miss Havisham requesting that he visit. Estella has returned!

## PRESENTATION

As the second stage begins, Pip meets the individuals who will influence this new phase of his life. Coincidence plays an important role in bringing together these characters and in the development of the different subplots, but Dick-

6 “Now, I have nothing to say to *you*,” said Mr. Jaggers. “I told you from the first it was a tossup. Have you paid Wemmick?”

“Yes, sir,” said both the men together.

“Very well; then you may go. If you say a word to me, I’ll throw up the case.”

“We thought, Mr. Jaggers—” one of the men began, pulling off his hat.

“That’s what I told you not to do,” said Mr. Jaggers. “*You* thought! I think for you; that’s enough for you.

“And now *you*!” said Mr. Jagger, suddenly stopping and turning on the two women with the shawls. “Once for all; if you come here, bothering about your Bill, I’ll make an example of both your Bill and you, and let him slip through my fingers. Have you paid Wemmick?”

“Oh, yes, sir! Every farthing.”

“Very well. Say another word—one single word—and Wemmick shall give you your money back.” This terrible threat caused the two women to fall off immediately.

Without further interruption we reached the front office. My guardian then took me into his own room, and while he lunched, informed me what arrangements he had made for me. I was to go to Barnard’s Inn, to young Mr. Pocket’s rooms, where a bed had been sent in for my accommodation; I was to remain with young Mr. Pocket until Monday; on Monday I was to go with him to his father’s house on a visit. Also, I was told what my allowance was to be—it was a very liberal one—and had handed to me the cards of certain tradesmen with whom I was to deal for all kinds of clothes and such other things as I could in reason want. “You will find your credit good, Mr. Pip,” said my guardian, “but I shall by this means be able to check your bills, and to pull you up if I find you outrunning the constable.

8 Of course you’ll go wrong somehow, but that’s no fault of mine.”

9 After I had pondered a little over this encouraging sentiment, I asked Mr. Jaggers if I could send for a coach. He said it was not worthwhile, I was so near my destination; Wemmick should walk round with me, if I pleased.

10 I then found that Wemmick was the clerk in the next room. I accompanied him into the street, after shaking hands with my guardian. We found a new set of people lingering outside, but Wemmick made a way among them by saying coolly yet decisively, “I tell you it’s no use; he won’t have a word to say to one of you”; and we soon got clear of them and went on side by side.

11 Casting my eyes on Mr. Wemmick as we went along, to see what he was like in the light of day, I found him to be a dry man, rather short in stature, with a square wooden face. He wore his hat on the back of his head, and looked straight before him, walking in a self-contained way as if there were nothing in the streets to claim his attention. His mouth was such a post office of a mouth that he had a mechanical appearance of smiling.

“Do you know where Mr. Matthew Pocket lives?” I asked Mr. Wemmick.

“Yes,” said he, nodding in the direction. “At Hammersmith, west of London.”

“Is that far?”

“Well! Say five miles.”

“Do you know him?”

“Why, you are a regular cross-examiner!” said Mr. Wemmick, looking at me with an approving air. “Yes, I know him. *I* know him!”

There was an air of toleration about these words that rather depressed me; and I was still looking sideways at his block of a face in search of any encouraging note when he said here we were at Barnard’s Inn. I had supposed that establishment to be a hotel kept by Mr. Barnard, to which the Blue Boar in our town was a mere public house. Whereas I now found Barnard

6 **Characterization.** Jaggers is unfriendly, impolite, selfish, extremely egotistical, and, above all, a bully.

7 Eating his lunch while meeting with client, Jaggers again displays his rude haste.

8 **Foreshadowing.** What seems to be arrogance on part of Jaggers turns out to be prophetic: Pip does indeed “go wrong somewhere.”

9 Pip is being facetious; Jaggers’ words are quite discouraging.

10 **What might be inferred about Jaggers from Wemmick’s remark?** Responses will vary. He is aloof and indifferent toward those who request his services.

11 **Characterization.** Wemmick is dry and businesslike only while at work; Pip later learns that at home he is warm and friendly.



ens is careful to ensure that there are logical explanations for these events. For example, upon his arrival in London, Pip learns that he is to share lodgings with Herbert Pocket, the young man who challenged Pip to a fight at Miss Havisham's. There is, however, an explanation for

this seeming coincidence. Jaggers is responsible for Pip's initial arrangements in London, and Herbert, whom Jaggers knows through Miss Havisham, is the only suitable young man of Jaggers' acquaintance.

Pip begins the second stage of his expectations

secure in the knowledge that he is destined for both great expectations (wealth) and for Estella. However, these expectations are an illusion which is continually juxtaposed against reality. Both London and his lodgings are less glamorous than Pip anticipated. Herbert doubts that Pip's

12

This is one of Pip's first disappointments; he was expecting better lodgings.

13

**Irony.** Wemmick's apparent expectation that Pip will do no more than rapidly spend a lot of money is very different from Pip's "expectation" of rapid social and financial success.

14

Although Pip has come to London with adult expectations, he still fidgets childishly by writing on windows.

15

Herbert Pocket, helpful and generous, will be Pip's closest friend, confessor, and companion throughout his ordeal.

16

Herbert's cheerfulness despite his apartment's shortcomings is very different from Pip's disappointment with London.

to be a fiction and his inn the dingiest collection of shabby buildings ever squeezed together in a rank corner as a club for tomcats. We entered a melancholy little square that looked to me like a flat burying ground. I thought it had the most dismal trees in it, and the most dismal sparrows, and the most dismal cats, and the most dismal houses that I had **15** ever seen. The windows of the houses were in every stage of dilapidated blind and curtain, crippled flowerpot, cracked glass, dusty decay, and miserable makeshift.

So imperfect was this realization of the first of my great expectations that I looked in dismay at Mr. Wemmick. He led me up a flight of stairs, which appeared to be slowly collapsing into sawdust, to a set of chambers on the top floor. MR POCKET, JUN., was printed on the door, and there was a label on the letter box, "Return shortly."

"He hardly thought you'd come so soon," Mr. Wemmick explained. "You don't want me any more?"

"No, thank you," said I.

**13** "As I keep the cash," Mr. Wemmick observed, "we shall most likely meet pretty often. Good day."

When he was gone, I opened the staircase window and had nearly beheaded myself, for the lines had rotted away, and it came down like the guillotine.<sup>2</sup> After this escape, I was content to stand dolefully looking out, saying to myself that London was decidedly overrated.

Mr. Pocket, Junior's, idea of "shortly" was not mine, for I had nearly maddened myself **16** with looking out for half an hour, and had **14** written my name with my finger several times in the dirt of every pane in the window, before I heard footsteps on the stairs. Gradually there

arose before me the hat, head, waistcoat, trousers, boots, of a member of society of about my own standing. He had a paper bag under each arm and a pottle<sup>3</sup> of strawberries in one hand, and was out of breath.

"Mr. Pip?" said he.

"Mr. Pocket?" said I.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed, "I am extremely sorry; but I knew there was a coach from your part of the country at midday, and I thought you would come by that one. The fact is, I have been out on your account—not that that is any excuse—for I thought, coming from the country, you might like a little fruit after dinner, and I went to Covent Garden Market to get it."

For a reason that I had, I felt as if my eyes would start out of my head. I began to think this was a dream.

"Pray come in," said Mr. Pocket, Junior. "Allow me to lead the way. I am rather bare here, but I hope you'll be able to make out tolerably well till Monday. My father thought you would get on more agreeably through tomorrow with me than with him, and might like to take a walk about London. I am sure I shall be very happy to show London to you. As to our table, it will be supplied from our coffeehouse here, and (it is only right I should add) at your expense, such being Mr. Jaggers' directions. As to our lodging, it's not by any means splendid, because I have my own bread to earn, and my father hasn't anything to give me, and I shouldn't be willing to take it if he had. This is our sitting room—just such chairs and tables and carpet and so forth, you see, as they could spare from home. This is my little bedroom; rather musty, but Barnard's is musty. This is your bedroom; the furniture's hired for the occasion, but I trust it will answer the purpose; if you should want anything, I'll go and fetch

2. **guillotine** (gī'l'a-tēn): a machine with a heavy blade, used to cut off a person's head.

3. **pottle** (pōt'l): a small basket used for holding fruit (British).

adored Estella is able to love anyone. Finally he learns that his sudden good fortune is not due to Miss Havisham's generosity and that he is not being groomed for Estella. His love for Estella blinds him to reality: the value of his relationship with Joe and Biddy, the fact that Miss Havisham

is unlikely to be his benefactor and has certainly not intended him for Estella. His desire to be worthy of her fuels his snobbery, which in turn causes him to reject his old relationships. At the end of this stage his illusions are shattered, and he has learned that the source of his good for-

tune is the convict he had once aided out of fear.

it. The chambers are retired,<sup>4</sup> and we shall be alone together, but we shan't fight, I dare say."

As I stood opposite to Mr. Pocket, Junior, I saw the starting appearance come into his own eyes that I knew to be in mine, and he said, falling back:

17 "Lord bless me, you're the prowling boy!"

"And you," said I, "are the pale young gentleman!"

## Chapter 17

*Pip gets a new name.*

The pale young gentleman and I stood contemplating one another in Barnard's Inn, until we both burst out laughing.

"The idea of its being you!" said he. "The idea of its being you!" said I. And then we contemplated one another afresh, and laughed again. "Well!" said the pale young gentleman, reaching out his hand good-humoredly, "it's all over now, I hope, and it will be magnanimous in you if you'll forgive me for having knocked you about so."

I derived from this speech that Mr. Herbert Pocket (for Herbert was the pale young gentleman's name) still rather confounded his intention with his execution. But I made a modest reply, and we shook hands warmly.

2 "You hadn't come into your good fortune at that time?" said Herbert Pocket.

"No," said I.

"No," he acquiesced. "I heard it had happened very lately. I was rather on the lookout for good fortune then."

"Indeed?"

"Yes. Miss Havisham had sent for me, to see if she could take a fancy to me. But she couldn't—at all events, she didn't."

4. **retired**: secluded; having few neighbors.

I thought it polite to remark that I was surprised to hear that.

3 "Bad taste," said Herbert, laughing, "but a fact. Yes, she had sent for me on a trial visit, and if I had come out of it successfully, I suppose I should have been provided for; perhaps I should have been what-you-may-call-it to Estella."

"What's that?" I asked, with sudden anxiety.

He was arranging his fruit in plates while we talked, which divided his attention, and was the cause of his having made this lapse of a word. "Affianced," he explained, still busy with the fruit. "Engaged. Betrothed."

"How did you bear your disappointment?" I asked.

"Pooh!" said he. "I didn't care much for it. *She's* a tartar."<sup>1</sup>

4 "Miss Havisham?"

5 "I don't say no to that, but I meant Estella. That girl's hard and haughty and capricious to the last degree, and has been brought up by Miss Havisham to wreak revenge on all the male sex."

"What relation is she to Miss Havisham?"

"None," said he. "Only adopted."

"Why should she wreak revenge on all the male sex? What revenge?"

"Lord, Mr. Pip!" said he. "Don't you know?"

"No," said I.

"Dear me! It's quite a story, and shall be saved till dinnertime. Mr. Jaggers is your guardian, I understand?" he went on.

"Yes."

"You know he is Miss Havisham's man of business and solicitor,<sup>2</sup> and has her confidence when nobody else has?"

1. **tartar** (tār'tār): one with a cruel, ferocious nature.

2. **solicitor** (sə-lis'ā-tər): in England, a lawyer who handles a client's legal affairs, as distinguished from a barrister (bār'ī-stər), who pleads cases in court.

## 17

*Is this coincidental meeting believable?* Answers will vary. Believable or not, it should be remembered that Dickens was writing for serial publication. Such chapter endings served to maintain reader interest between issues.

## Chapter 17

### 1

Pip disagrees with Herbert's belief that he won fight. Out of politeness, Pip does not argue.

### 2

Herbert is friendly, but he is still aware of class divisions; first thing he notices about Pip is his improved economic situation.

### 3

Herbert obviously does not care as much for Miss Havisham's and Estella's regard as Pip does.

### 4

It is incomprehensible to Pip that Herbert might be referring to Estella.

### 5

**Plot.** This is Pip's first clue as to Miss Havisham's overt malice and first step in Pip's understanding Estella.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

In this movie production of *Great Expectations*, John Mills (on the right) played the part of the adult Pip, and Alec Guinness (on the left) played the part of the adult Herbert Pocket. This is one of the first films that Guinness made under David Lean's direction; others include *Dr. Zhivago*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, and *A Passage to India*.

### Ideas for Writing

Have students observe and analyze Pip's outfit in this photograph. Then encourage them to discuss what their reactions might be to a new student who was overdressed. Ask them, also, to consider how Pip might dress if his story took place in the present instead of the early nineteenth century. Have students write paragraphs discussing their definitions of and opinions about style.





6 This was bringing me (I felt) toward dangerous ground. I answered with a constraint I made no attempt to disguise that I had seen Mr. Jaggers in Miss Havisham's house on the very day of our combat, but never at any other time, and that I believed he had no recollection of having ever seen me there.

"He was so obliging as to suggest my father for your tutor, and he called on my father to propose it. Of course he knew about my father from his connection with Miss Havisham. My father is Miss Havisham's cousin; not that that implies familiar intercourse between them, for he is a bad courtier and will not propitiate<sup>3</sup> her."

7 Herbert Pocket had a frank and easy way with him that was very taking. I have never seen anyone who more strongly expressed to me, in every look and tone, a natural incapacity to do anything secret and mean. There was something wonderfully hopeful about his general air, and something that at the same time whispered to me he would never be very successful or rich. He was still a pale young gentleman, without much strength. He had not a handsome face, but it was better than handsome, being extremely amiable and cheerful.

As he was so communicative, I told him my small story, and laid stress on my being forbidden to inquire who my benefactor was. I further mentioned that as I had been brought up a blacksmith in a country place, and knew very little of the ways of politeness, I would take it as a great kindness in him if he would give me a hint whenever he saw me at a loss or going wrong.

"With pleasure," said he, "though I venture to prophesy that you'll want very few hints. Will you begin at once to call me by my Christian name, Herbert?"

I thanked him and said I would. I informed

him in exchange that my Christian name was Philip.

"I don't take to Philip," said he, smiling, "for it sounds like a moral boy out of the spelling book. Would you mind Handel for a familiar name? There's a charming piece of music by Handel<sup>4</sup> called the Harmonious Blacksmith."

8 "I should like it very much."

"Then, my dear Handel," said he, turning round as the door opened, "here is the dinner."

We had made some progress in the dinner, when I reminded Herbert of his promise to tell me about Miss Havisham.

"True," he replied. "Let me introduce the topic, Handel, by mentioning that in London it is not the custom to put the knife in the mouth—for fear of accidents—and that while the fork is reserved for that use, it is not put farther in than necessary. It is scarcely worth mentioning, only it's as well to do as other people do. Also, the spoon is not generally used overhand, but under. This has two advantages. You get at your mouth better (which after all is the object), and you save a good deal of the attitude of opening oysters on the part of the right elbow."

He offered these friendly suggestions in such a lively way that we both laughed.

10 "Now," he pursued, "Miss Havisham was a spoiled child. Her mother died when she was a baby, and her father denied her nothing. He was very rich and very proud. So was his daughter."

"Miss Havisham was an only child?" I hazarded.

"Stop a moment, I am coming to that. No, she was not an only child; she had a half brother. Her father privately married again—his cook, I rather think."

4. **Handel** (händ'l): George Frederick Handel (1685–1759).

6 *What might Pip mean by "dangerous ground"?* Pip believes Miss Havisham is his benefactor; since he is not to attempt to discover his benefactor's identity, he is leery of discussion that might connect him with her.

7 **Characterization.** Pip is making this comment years after his first encounter with Herbert. He still has the same appreciation of Herbert's good nature as he did upon that first meeting.

8 Pip's taking new name serves to underscore break with former life, including its positive aspects, such as relationship with Joe.

9 Through humor, Herbert blunts unpleasantness of correcting Pip's table manners.

10 **Characterization.** In this sense at least, Miss Havisham has not changed since her youth; she is still proud, rich, and haughty.

3. **propitiate** (prō-plish'ē-āt): court the favor of.

11

In this respect, Miss Havisham has changed since she was jilted; most readers will find it hard to imagine her idolizing anyone.

12

Miss Havisham, then and now, is too proud to let anyone help her.

13

**Characterization.** Disappointed in love, Miss Havisham makes her life a memorial to that disappointment. By withdrawing from outside world, stopping clocks, leaving cake to rot, and wearing wedding dress, she ensures that the cause of her disappointment will not be forgotten, at least until her death.

"I thought he was proud," said I.

"My good Handel, so he was. He married his second wife privately, because he *was* proud, and in the course of time *she* died. When she was dead, I apprehend he first told his daughter what he had done, and then the son became a part of the family, residing in the house you are acquainted with. As the son became a young man, he turned out riotous, extravagant, undutiful—altogether bad. At last his father disinherited him; but he softened when he was dying and left him well off, though not nearly so well off as Miss Havisham.

"Miss Havisham was now an heiress, and was looked after as a great match. Her half brother had now ample means again, but wasted them most fearfully. There were strong differences between him and her, and it is suspected that he cherished a deep and mortal grudge against her. Now, I come to the cruel part of the story.

"There appeared upon the scene a certain man, who made love to Miss Havisham. I have heard my father mention that he was a showy man, and the kind of man for the purpose. But he was not to be mistaken for a gentleman. Well! This man pursued Miss Havisham closely and professed to be devoted to her. There is

11 no doubt that she perfectly idolized him. He got great sums of money from her, and he induced her to buy her brother out of a share in the brewery (which had been weakly left him by his father) at an immense price, on the plea that when he was her husband he must hold and mange it all. Your guardian was not at that  
12 time in Miss Havisham's councils, and she was too haughty and too much in love to be advised by anyone. Her relations were poor and scheming, with the exception of my father; he was poor enough, but not time-serving or jealous. The only independent one among them, he warned her that she was doing too much for this man, and was placing herself too unreserv-

edly in his power. She took the first opportunity of angrily ordering my father out of the house, in his presence, and my father has never seen her since."

I thought of her having said, "Matthew will come and see me at last when I am laid dead upon that table."

"To return to the man and make an end of him. The marriage day was fixed, the wedding dresses were bought, the wedding guests were invited. The day came, but not the bridegroom. He wrote a letter——"

"Which she received," I struck in, "when she was dressing for her marriage? At twenty minutes to nine?"

13 "At the hour and minute," said Herbert, nodding, "at which she afterward stopped all the clocks. What was in it, further than that it most heartlessly broke the marriage off, I can't tell you, because I don't know. When she recovered from a bad illness, she laid the whole place waste, as you have seen it, and she has never since looked upon the light of day."

"Is that all the story?" I asked, after considering it.

"All that I know of it. But I have forgotten one thing. It has been supposed that the man to whom she gave her misplaced confidence acted throughout in concert with her half brother; that it was a conspiracy between them; and that they shared the profits."

"What became of the two men? Are they alive now?"

"I don't know."

"You said just now that Estella was not related to Miss Havisham, but adopted. When adopted?"

Herbert shrugged his shoulders. "There has always been an Estella, since I have heard of a Miss Havisham. I know no more."

"And all I know," I replied, "you know."

"I fully believe it. And as to the condition on which you hold your advancement in life—

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage may be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying the sequence of events. Ask students to read the passage carefully and then choose the response that best answers the question: What happened

just after Herbert and Pip ate lunch? A. Pip interviewed for a job with Herbert. (Irrelevant. Event is not contained in the passage) B. Herbert and Pip took a coach to Hammersmith. (Correct) C. Herbert went to the countinghouse to look around him. (Incorrect. Event occurred before

lunch) D. Pip meets Mr. Pocket. (Incorrect. Event is last in passage)

namely, that you are not to inquire or discuss to whom you owe it—you may be very sure that it will never be even approached by me.”

- 14 He said this with so much delicacy that I felt he as perfectly understood Miss Havisham to be my benefactress as I understood the fact myself.

We were very gay and sociable, and I asked him in the course of conversation what he was.

- 15 He replied, “An insurer of ships. I shall not rest satisfied with merely insuring ships. I think I shall trade,” said he, leaning back in his chair, “to the East Indies for shawls, spices, dyes, drugs, and precious woods. It’s an interesting trade.”

Quite overpowered by the magnificence of these transactions, I asked him where the ships he insured mostly traded to at present.

“I haven’t begun insuring yet,” he replied. “I am looking about me.”

Somehow, that pursuit seemed more in keeping with Barnard’s Inn. I said (in a tone of conviction), “Ah-h!”

“Yes, I am in a countinghouse,<sup>5</sup> and looking about me.”

“Is a countinghouse profitable?” I asked.

“Why, n-no; not to me. Not directly profitable. That is, it doesn’t pay me anything, and I have to—keep myself. But the thing is, that you look about you. *That’s* the grand thing. You are in a countinghouse, you know, and you look about you.”

This was very like his way of conducting that encounter in the garden; very like. His manner of bearing his poverty, too, exactly corresponded to his manner of bearing that defeat. It seemed to me that he took all blows and buffets now, with just the same air as he had taken mine then. It was evident that he had nothing around him but the simplest necessities, for

everything that I remarked upon turned out to have been sent in on my account from the coffeehouse or somewhere else. Yet, having already made his fortune in his own mind, he was so unassuming that I felt quite grateful to him for not being puffed up. It was a pleasant addition to his naturally pleasant ways, and we got on famously.

## Chapter 18

*Pip meets Mr. Matthew Pocket.*

- On Monday morning at a quarter before nine, Herbert went to the countinghouse to report himself—to look around him, too, I suppose—and I bore him company. He was to come away in an hour or two to attend me to Hammersmith, and I was to wait about for him. When Herbert came, we went and had lunch and then took coach for Hammersmith. We arrived at two or three o’clock in the afternoon. Lifting the latch of a gate, we passed into a garden overlooking the river, where Mr. Pocket’s children were playing about.

- Mr. Pocket came out to make my acquaintance. He was a gentleman with a rather perplexed expression of face, and with his very gray hair disordered on his head, as if he didn’t quite see his way to putting anything straight. Mr. Pocket said he was glad to see me, and he hoped I was not sorry to see him. “For I am really not,” he added, with his son’s smile, “an alarming personage.” He was a young-looking man, in spite of his perplexities and his very gray hair, and his manner seemed quite natural. ◀

Mr. Pocket took me into the house and showed me my room, which was a pleasant one. He then knocked at the doors of two other similar rooms and introduced me to their occupants, by name Drummle and

## 14

Example of Pip’s making assumptions about real world that are not necessarily true. Just as Pip assumes his “expectations” will come true, he also assumes he knows Herbert’s thoughts.

## 15

**Characterization.** Like Pip, Herbert is very ambitious. He too seems to have difficulty distinguishing between illusion and reality. He is not, in fact, an insurer of ships. He is only planning to become one. He does not seem to perceive disadvantages in being unpaid clerk. His expectation of becoming rich merchant is unrealistic but underscores his optimistic nature, as does repetition of “looking about.”

## Chapter 18

### 1

Remark suggests Mr. Pocket has heard of Pip’s connections to Miss Havisham and does not want to be judged by what Miss Havisham might have said about him.

5. **countinghouse:** an office or building where a company handles accounts and correspondence.



**2** Although relatively poor, Mr. Pocket is not member of lower class because of his education. Education was indicator of social class.

**3** In addition to table manners, Pip must learn to row with style if he is to make transition into upper class and realize his "expectations."

**4** *What is meant by "hold my own"?* Pip hopes to acquire enough knowledge to carry on polite conversation in polite company and enough polish to avoid making fool of himself.

**5** Jagers is being facetious; he means nearly the opposite of what he says. By "get on" he means that Pip is fulfilling his prophecy about running up debts—which indeed Pip does.

**6** **Characterization.** This is first clue that there is another side to Wemmick. He is more human than first impressions lead reader to believe.

Startop. Drummle, an old-looking young man of a heavy order of architecture,<sup>1</sup> was whistling. Startop, younger in years and appearance, was reading and holding his head, as if he thought himself in danger of exploding it with too strong a charge of knowledge.

**2** By degrees I learned, chiefly from Herbert, that Mr. Pocket had been educated at Harrow and Cambridge,<sup>2</sup> where he had distinguished himself. He had come to London and here, after gradually failing in loftier hopes, he had turned his acquirements to the account of literary compilation<sup>3</sup> and correction.

In the evening there was rowing on the river. As Drummle and Startop had each a boat, I resolved to set up mine, and to cut them both out. I was pretty good at most exercises in which country boys are adepts, but as I was **3** conscious of wanting elegance of style for the Thames,<sup>4</sup> I at once engaged to place myself under the tuition of the winner of a prize wherry<sup>5</sup> who plied at our stairs, and to whom I was introduced by my new allies.

After two or three days, when I had established myself in my room and had gone backward and forward to London several times, Mr. Pocket and I had a long talk together. He knew more of my intended career than I knew myself, for his having been told by Mr. Jagers that I was not designed for any profession, and that I should be well enough educated for my **4** destiny if I could "hold my own" with the average of young men in prosperous circumstances.

When I had begun to work in earnest, it oc-

curred to me that if I could retain my bedroom in Barnard's Inn, my life would be agreeably varied, while my manners would be none the worse for Herbert's society; so I went off to Little Britain and imparted my wish to Mr. Jagers.

"If I could buy the furniture now hired for me," said I, "and one or two other little things, I should be quite at home there."

**5** "Go it!" said Mr. Jagers, with a short laugh. "I told you you'd get on. Well! How much do you want?"

I said I didn't know how much.

"Come!" retorted Mr. Jagers. "How much? Fifty pounds?"

"Oh, not nearly so much."

"Five pounds?" said Mr. Jager.

This was such a great fall, that I said in discomfiture, "Oh! more than that."

"More than that, eh!" retorted Mr. Jagers. "How much more?"

"It is so difficult to fix a sum," said I, hesitating.

"Wemmick!" said Mr. Jagers, opening his office door. "Take Mr. Pip's written order, and pay him twenty pounds."

This strongly marked way of doing business made a strongly marked impression on me, and that not of an agreeable kind. As he happened to go out now, and as Wemmick was brisk and talkative, I said to Wemmick that I hardly knew what to make of Mr. Jagers' manner.

**6** "Tell him that, and he'll take it as a compliment," answered Wemmick. "He don't mean that you *should* know what to make of it.—Oh!" for I looked surprised, "it's not personal; it's professional, only professional."

He went on to say in a friendly manner:

"If at any odd time when you have nothing better to do, you wouldn't mind coming over to see me at Walworth, I could offer you a bed, and I should consider it an honor. I have not

1. **heavy . . . architecture:** a large and heavyset physique.

2. **Harrow and Cambridge:** Harrow is a preparatory school, and Cambridge a famous university in England.

3. **compilation:** the gathering of materials from different sources for a book such as an anthology.

4. **Thames (tēmz):** a river that passes through London.

5. **wherry (hwēr'ē):** a light, fast rowboat, sometimes used for racing.

much to show you but such two or three curiosities as I have and a bit of garden and a summerhouse."

I said I should be delighted to accept his hospitality.

7 "Thankee," said he. "Then we'll consider that it's to come off, when convenient to you. Have you dined with Mr. Jaggers yet?"

"Not yet."

8 "Well," said Wemmick, "he'll give you wine, and good wine. I'll give you punch, and not bad punch. And now I'll tell you something.

9 When you go to dine with Mr. Jaggers, look at his housekeeper."

"Shall I see something very uncommon?"

"Well," said Wemmick, "you'll see a wild beast tamed. It won't lower your opinion of Mr. Jaggers' powers. Keep your eye on it."

I told him I would do so, with all the interest and curiosity that his preparation awakened.

## Chapter 19

*Pip's friendships increase.*

1 Bentley Drummle, who was so sulky a fellow that he even took up a book as if its writer had done him an injury, did not take up an acquaintance in a more agreeable spirit. Heavy in figure, movement, and comprehension, he was idle, proud, niggardly, reserved, and suspicious. He came of rich people who had nursed this combination of qualities until they made the discovery that it was just of age and a blockhead. Thus, Bentley Drummle had come to Mr. Pocket when he was a head taller than that gentleman, and half a dozen heads thicker than most gentlemen.

Startop had been spoiled by a weak mother and kept at home when he ought to have been at school, but he was devotedly attached to her

and admired her beyond measure. He had a 2 woman's delicacy of feature. It was but natural that I should take to him much more kindly than to Drummle, and that even in the earliest evenings of our boating, he and I should pull homeward abreast of one another, conversing from boat to boat, while Bentley Drummle came up in our wake alone.

Herbert was my intimate companion and friend. I presented him with a half share in my boat, which was the occasion of his often coming down to Hammersmith; and my possession of a half share in his chambers often took me up to London. We used to walk between the two places at all hours.

These were the surroundings among which I settled down and applied myself to my education. I soon contracted expensive habits and began to spend an amount of money that within a few short months I should have thought almost fabulous. But through good and evil I stuck to my books, Between Mr. Pocket and Herbert I got on fast.

I had not seen Mr. Wemmick for some weeks when I thought I would write him a note and propose to go home with him on a certain evening. He replied that it would give him much pleasure, and that he would expect me at the office at six o'clock. Thither I went, and found him, putting the key of his safe down his back as the clock struck.

"Did you think of walking down to Walworth?" said he.

"Certainly," said I, "if you approve."

"Very much," was Wemmick's reply, "for I have had my legs under the desk all day, and shall be glad to stretch them. Now I'll tell you what I've got for supper—a cold roast fowl. You don't object to an aged parent, I hope?"

I really thought he was still speaking of the fowl, until he added, "Because I have got an aged parent at my place." I then said what politeness required.

7

**Dialect.** "Thankee" indicates that Wemmick belongs to a class lower than Jaggers. In England, speech indicates social class. Throughout novel, Dickens indicates characters' social standing by their use of dialect.

8

Wemmick is forthright in admitting that there are differences between him and Jaggers, as indicated in what each serves to guests.

9

**Foreshadowing.** First clue to importance of Molly, Jaggers' housekeeper and Estella's real mother.

## Chapter 19

1

**Characterization.** Pip tells readers that Drummle is a disagreeable person whom he immediately disliked. Later events show that Pip's assessment is accurate.

2

Pip's preference for Startop shows good judgment; Startop will later help rescue Pip from Orlick.

3

**Contracted:** acquired.

4

A first hint of Wemmick's eccentric home and home life.

5

Wemmick is referring to cannon. It is not unusual to use gender pronouns to refer to objects. For example, ships are often referred to as "she."

6

*What does Wemmick mean by "the Newgate cobwebs"?* Responses will vary. He probably means stiflingly rigid, businesslike atmosphere of Jaggers' office.

7

**Characterization.** Surroundings allow Wemmick's gentle side to emerge. His home, which might be considered as odd as Miss Havisham's, is a reflection of his love for his father and, as a result, has very different effect than Satis House.

"So you haven't dined with Mr. Jaggers yet?" he pursued, as we walked along.

"Not yet."

"He told me so this afternoon. I expect you'll have an invitation tomorrow. He's going to ask your pals, too. Three of 'em, ain't there? Well, he's going to ask the whole gang."

Mr. Wemmick and I beguiled the time talking, until he gave me to understand that we had arrived in the district of Walworth. It appeared to be a collection of black lanes, ditches, and little gardens. Wemmick's house was a little wooden cottage in the midst of plots  
4 of garden, and the top of it was cut out and painted like a battery mounted with guns.

"My own doing," said Wemmick. "Looks pretty, don't it?"

I highly commended it. I think it was the smallest house I ever saw.

"That's a real flagstaff, you see," said Wemmick, "and on Sundays I run up a real flag. Then look here. After I have crossed this bridge, I hoist it up—so—and cut off the communication."

The bridge was a plank, and it crossed a chasm about four feet wide and two deep. But it was very pleasant to see the pride with which he hoisted it up and made it fast, smiling as he did so, with a relish and not merely mechanically.

"At nine o'clock every night, Greenwich time,"<sup>1</sup> said Wemmick, "the gun fires. There  
5 he is, you see! And when you hear him go, I think you'll say he's a Stinger."

That piece of ordnance referred to was mounted in a separate fortress, constructed of latticework. It was protected from the weather by an ingenious little tarpaulin umbrella.

"Then, at the back," said Wemmick, "there's a pig, and there are fowls and rabbits; and I grow cucumbers. So, sir," said Wemmick, smiling

1. **Greenwich** (grin'ij) **time:** the official basis of standard time throughout the world.

ing again, but seriously, too, as he shook his head, "if you can suppose the little place besieged, it would hold out a devil of a time in point of provisions."

Then he conducted me to a bower about a dozen yards off, and in this retreat our glasses were already set forth.

"I am my own engineer, and my own carpenter, and my own plumber, and my own gardener, and my own Jack-of-all-trades," said Wemmick, in acknowledging my compliments. "Well, it's a good thing, you know. It brushes  
6 the Newgate<sup>2</sup> cobwebs away, and pleases the Aged. You wouldn't mind being at once introduced to the Aged, would you? It wouldn't put you out?"

I expressed the readiness I felt, and we went into the castle. There we found, sitting by a fire, a very old man in a flannel coat; clean, cheerful, comfortable, and well cared for, but intensely deaf.

"Well, Aged Parent," said Wemmick, shaking hands with him in a cordial way, "how am you?"

"All right, John; all right!" replied the old man.

"Here's Mr. Pip, Aged Parent," said Wemmick, "and I wish you could hear his name. Nod away at him, Mr. Pip; that's what he likes. Nod away at him, if you please."

"This is a fine place of my son's, sir," cried the old man, while I nodded as hard as I possibly could.

7 "You're as proud of it as Punch; ain't you, Aged?" said Wemmick, contemplating the old man, with his hard face really softened; "*there's* a nod for you," giving him a tremendous one; "*there's* another for you," giving him a still more tremendous one; "you like that, don't you? If you're not tired, Mr. Pip—though I

2. **Newgate:** Newgate Prison. Wemmick's dealings as Mr. Jaggers' clerk were largely with persons who were trying to get out or keep out of Newgate.



know it's tiring to strangers—will you tip him one more? You can't think how it pleases him."

I tipped him several more, and he was in great spirits. We left him bestirring himself to feed the fowls, and we sat down to our punch in the arbor, where Wemmick told me, as he smoked a pipe, that it had taken him a good many years to bring the property up to its present pitch of perfection.

"I hope Mr. Jaggers admires it," I said.

"Never seen it," said Wemmick. "Never heard of it. Never seen the Aged. Never heard 10 of him. No; the office is one thing, and private life is another. When I go into the office, I leave the Castle behind me, and when I come into the Castle, I leave the office behind me. If it's not in any way disagreeable to you, you'll 8 oblige me by doing the same. I don't wish it professionally spoken about."

Of course I felt my good faith involved in the observance of his request. The punch being very nice, we sat there drinking it and talking until it was almost nine o'clock. "Getting near gunfire," said Wemmick then, as he laid down his pipe. "It's the Aged's treat."

Proceeding into the Castle again, we found the Aged heating the poker, with expectant eyes, as a preliminary to the performance of this great nightly ceremony. Wemmick stood with his watch in his hand until the moment was come for him to take the red-hot poker from the Aged, and repair<sup>3</sup> to the Battery. He took it, and went out, and presently the Stinger went off with a bang that shook the crazy little box of a cottage as if it must fall to pieces, and made every glass and teacup in it ring. Upon this the Aged—who I believe would have been blown out of his armchair but for holding on 9 by the elbows—cried out exultingly, "He's fired! I heard him!" and I nodded at the old gentleman until I absolutely could not see him.

3. **repair:** go.

The supper was excellent. I was heartily pleased with my whole entertainment. Nor was there any drawback to my little turret bedroom.

Our breakfast was as good as the supper, and at half past eight we started for Little Britain. By degrees, Wemmick seemed to get drier and harder as we went along. At last when we got to his place of business and he pulled out his key, he looked as unconscious of his Walworth property as if the Castle and the drawbridge and the arbor and the Aged had all been blown into space together by the last discharge of the Stinger.

## Chapter 20

*Pip has dinner at Mr. Jaggers' and observes his housekeeper.*

1 It fell out, as Wemmick had told me it would, that my guardian gave me the invitation for myself and my friends. "No ceremony," he stipulated, "and no dinner dress, and say tomorrow."

When I and my friends repaired to him at six o'clock next day, he conducted us to Gerard Street, Soho, to a house on the south side of that street, rather a stately house of its kind, but dolefully in want of painting, and with 2 dirty windows. We went up a dark brown staircase into a series of three dark brown rooms on the first floor.

Dinner was laid in the best of these rooms. The table was comfortably laid and at the side of his chair was a dumbwaiter,<sup>1</sup> with a variety of bottles and decanters on it and four dishes 3 of fruit for dessert. I noticed throughout that he kept everything under his own hand, and distributed everything himself.

1. **dumbwaiter:** small, movable table used for serving food.

### 8

*Why is Wemmick so insistent upon rigid separation of his home and work lives? Responses will vary. Wemmick probably wants to prevent poisoning of his warm home life with anxieties of Jaggers' office.*

### 9

Firing of cannon is expression of his love for his father: explosion is only thing Aged ever hears.

### 10

In Jaggers' impersonal office, Castle and Aged seemingly do not exist.

## Chapter 20

### 1

**Characterization.** Even issuing invitation to dine, Jaggers is cold and formal. Unlike Wemmick, he brings cool and brusque business manners into his private life.

### 2

Although Jaggers' house is much bigger than Wemmick's, it is dark and uninviting.

### 3

**Characterization.** Pip notices that Jaggers, rather than domestic help, serves food; additional evidence of Jaggers' need to control.

4 Jagers facetiously claims to "like the look of" Drummle, whom he describes as a "blotchy, sprawly, sulky fellow." Perhaps Jagers sees a future client in Drummle.

5 Jagers is powerful person and good lawyer, but that power is dark and malicious; he intimidates people and brings out the worst in them.

6 **Characterization.** Jagers' sadistic side is revealed. By showing Molly's wrists to the young men, he makes her an object for display.

7 In displaying Molly's physical strength, Jagers is showing he has psychological strength necessary to break her spirit.

As he had scarcely seen my three companions until now—for he and I had walked together—he stood on the hearthrug, after ringing the bell, and took a searching look at them. To my surprise, he seemed at once to be principally, if not solely, interested in Drummle.

"Pip," said he, putting his large hand on my shoulder and moving me to the window, "I don't know one from the other. Who's the Spider?"

"The Spider?" said I.

"The blotchy, sprawly, sulky fellow."

"That's Bentley Drummle," I replied. "The one with the delicate face is Startop."

4 Not taking the least account of "the one with the delicate face," he returned, "Bentley Drummle is his name, is it? I like the look of that fellow."

He immediately began to talk to Drummle. I was looking at the two when there came between me and them the housekeeper, with the first dish for the table.

She was a woman of about forty, tall, of a lithe, nimble figure, extremely pale, with large faded eyes and a quantity of streaming hair. She set the dish on, touched my guardian quietly on the arm with a finger to notify that dinner was ready, and vanished. No other attendant appeared.

Induced to take particular notice of the housekeeper, both by her own striking appearance and by Wemmick's preparation, I observed that whenever she was in the room, she kept her eyes attentively on my guardian. I fancied that I could detect in his manner a purpose of always holding her in suspense.

5 Dinner went off gaily, and although my guardian seemed to follow rather than originate subjects, I knew that he wrenched the weakest part of our dispositions out of us. I found that I was expressing my tendency to lavish expenditure, and to patronize Herbert,

and to boast of my great prospects. It was so with all of us, but with no one more than Drummle. He informed our host that he much preferred our room to our company, and that as to skill he was more than our master, and that as to strength he could scatter us like chaff. He fell to baring and spanning his arm to show how muscular it was, and we all fell to baring and spanning our arms in a ridiculous manner.

Now the housekeeper was at that time clearing the table, my guardian taking no heed of her. Suddenly, he clapped his large hand on the housekeeper's like a trap, as she stretched it across the table.

6 "If you talk of strength," said Mr. Jagers, "I'll show you a wrist. Molly, let me see your wrist."

Her entrapped hand was on the table, but she had already put her other hand behind her waist. "Master," she said, in a low voice, with her eyes attentively and entreatingly fixed upon him. "Don't."

"I'll show you a wrist," repeated Mr. Jagers, with an immovable determination to show it. "Molly, let them see your wrist."

"Master," she again murmured. "Please!"

"Molly," said Mr. Jagers, not looking at her, "let them see *both* your wrists. Show them. Come!"

He took his hand from hers, and turned that wrist up on the table. She brought her other hand from behind her, and held the two out side by side. The last wrist was much disfigured—deeply scarred and scarred across and across. When she held her hands out, she took her eyes from Mr. Jagers, and turned them watchfully on every one of the rest of us in succession.

7 "There's power here," said Mr. Jagers, coolly tracing out the sinews with his forefinger. "Very few men have the power of wrist that this woman has. It's remarkable what

mere force of grip there is in these hands. I have had occasion to notice many hands; but I never saw stronger in that respect, man's or woman's, than these. That'll do, Molly. You have been admired, and can go." She withdrew her hands and went out of the room, and Mr. Jaggers filled his glass and passed round the wine.

8 "At half past nine, gentlemen," said he, "we must break up. Pray make the best use of your time. I am glad to see you all. Mr. Drummle, I drink to you."

If his object in singling out Drummle were to bring him out still more, it perfectly succeeded. In a sulky triumph Drummle showed his morose depreciation of the rest of us in a more and more offensive degree, until he became downright intolerable. Through all his states, Mr. Jaggers followed him with the same strange interest.

9 In our boyish want of discretion I dare say we took too much to drink, and I know we talked too much. We became particularly hot upon some boorish sneer of Drummle's to the effect that we were too free with our money. Startop tried to turn the discussion aside with some small pleasantry that made us all laugh. Resenting this little success more than anything, Drummle, without any threat or warning, pulled his hands out of his pockets, dropped his round shoulders, swore, took up a large glass, and would have flung it at his adversary's head, but for our entertainer's dexterously seizing it at the instant it was raised.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Jaggers, deliberately putting down the glass, "I am exceedingly sorry to announce that it's half past nine."

11 On this hint we all rose to depart. Before we got to the street door, Startop was cheerily calling Drummle "old boy," as if nothing had happened. But the old boy would not even walk to Hammersmith on the same side of the way; so Herbert and I, who remained in town, saw

them going down the street on opposite sides, Startop leading, and Drummle lagging behind in the shadow of the houses.

12 In about a month after that, the Spider's time with Mr. Pocket was up for good, and, to the great relief of all the house, he went home to the family hole.

## Chapter 21

*Pip has a visitor.*

MY DEAR MR. PIP:

I write this by request of Mr. Gargery, for to let you know that he is going to London in company with Mr. Wopsle and would be glad if agreeable to be allowed to see you. He would call at Barnard's Hotel Tuesday morning at nine o'clock, when if not agreeable please leave word. Your poor sister is much the same as when you left. We talk of you in the kitchen every night, and wonder what you are saying and doing. If now considered in the light of a liberty, excuse it for the love of poor old days.

No more, dear Mr. Pip, from

Your ever obliged,  
and affectionate servant,  
*Biddy.*

P.S. He wishes me most particular to write *what larks*. He says you will understand. I hope and do not doubt it will be agreeable to see him even though a gentleman, for you had ever a good heart, and he is a worthy man. I have read him all excepting only the last little sentence, and he wishes me most particular to write again *what larks*.

I received this letter by post on Monday morning, and therefore its appointment was for next day. Let me confess exactly with what feelings I looked forward to Joe's coming.

8

**Characterization.** By setting an arbitrary time to end party, Jaggers again shows that he is businesslike in his personal life.

9

**Diction.** Rather than say he became drunk and obnoxious, Pip uses euphemisms like "took too much to drink" and "talked too much." Use of inoffensive euphemisms is characteristic of genteel, polite conversation.

10

Jaggers seems to enjoy watching his guests argue but conveniently stops party before real brawl begins.

11

**Characterization.** Startop shows his good nature by not holding grudge against Drummle for threatening violence.

12

Ironically, Pip uses Jaggers' nickname for Drummle, "Spider." Even though Pip doesn't think much of Jaggers, Jaggers' observations are often shrewd.

## Chapter 21

1

Since Pip has not written them, Joe and Biddy probably feel that Pip does not want to continue his relationships with them.



**2** **Irony.** Because of Joe's social class and background, Pip considers turning away man who most loves him and has treated him kindly. Ironical that Pip is more sensitive to opinion of Drummle, whom he despises.

**3** Pip is "going overboard" in his affected gentility; serving boy is more for show than necessity.

**4** **What does "AIR" mean here? Why is the word emphasized?** "Air" is "are" in Joe's dialect. Emphasis simultaneously contrasts Joe's dialect with Pip's speech and shows Joe's concern for Pip.

**5** **Characterization.** Joe is somewhat intimidated by Pip's great transformation.

**6** Joe's continual replacing of hat on mantelpiece reinforces Pip's image of Joe as inelegant clown.

**2** Not with pleasure, though I was bound to him by so many ties; no, with considerable disturbance and some mortification. If I could have kept him away by paying money, I certainly would have paid money. My greatest reassurance was that he was coming to Barnard's Inn, not to Hammersmith. I had little objection to his being seen by Herbert or his father, for both of whom I had respect; but I had the sharpest sensitiveness as to his being seen by Drummle, whom I held in contempt. So throughout life, our worst weaknesses and meannesses are usually committed for the sake of the people whom we most despise.

**3** I had got on so fast of late that I had even started a boy in boots<sup>1</sup>—top boots—and had clothed him with a blue coat, canary waistcoat, white cravat, creamy breeches, and the boots already mentioned. I had to find him a little to do and a great deal to eat; and with both of these horrible requirements he haunted my existence.

I came into town on Monday night to be ready for Joe, and I got up early in the morning, and caused the sitting room and breakfast table to assume their most splendid appearance.

Presently I heard Joe on the staircase. I knew it was Joe by his clumsy manner of coming upstairs. When at last he stopped outside our door, I could hear his finger tracing over the painted letters of my name. Finally he gave a faint single rap, and Pepper<sup>2</sup> announced, "Mr. Gargery!"

"Joe, how are you, Joe?"

**4** "Pip, how AIR you, Pip?"

With his good honest face all glowing and shining, and his hat put down on the floor between us, he caught both my hands and worked them straight up and down.

"I am glad to see you, Joe. Give me your hat."

But Joe, taking it up carefully with both hands, like a bird's nest with eggs in it, wouldn't hear of parting with that piece of property.

**5** "Which you have that growed," said Joe, "and that gentlefolked," Joe considered a little before he discovered this word; "as to be a honor to your king and country."

"And you, Joe, look wonderfully well."

"Thank God," said Joe, "I'm ekerval to most. And your sister, she's no worse than she were. And Biddy, she's ever right and ready."

Herbert had entered the room, so I presented Joe to Herbert. Joe, being invited to sit down to table, looked all round the room for a suitable spot on which to deposit his hat and ultimately stood it on an extreme corner of the chimney piece, from which it ever afterward fell off at intervals.

"Do you take tea or coffee, Mr. Gargery?" asked Herbert, who always presided of a morning.

"Thankee, sir," said Joe, stiff from head to foot, "I'll take whichever is most agreeable to yourself."

"What do you say to coffee?"

"Thankee, sir," said Joe, evidently dispirited by the proposal, "since you *are* so kind as to make chice of coffee, I will not run contrary to your own opinions. But don't you never find it a little 'eating?"

"Say tea, then," said Herbert, pouring it out.

**6** Here Joe's hat tumbled off the mantelpiece, and he started out of his chair and picked it up, and fitted it to the same exact spot.

"When did you come to town, Mr. Gargery?"

"Were it yesterday afternoon?" said Joe, after coughing behind his hand. "No it were not. Yes it were. Yes. It were yesterday afternoon" (with an appearance of mingled wis-

1. **started . . . boots:** hired a serving boy.

2. **Pepper:** the servant.

dom, relief, and strict impartiality).

"Have you seen anything of London, yet?"

"Why, yes, sir," said Joe, but his attention was attracted by his hat, which was toppling. Indeed, it demanded from him a constant attention. He made extraordinary play with it, and showed the greatest skill, now rushing at it and catching it neatly as it dropped; now merely stopping it midway, beating it up, finally splashing it into the slop basin, where I took the liberty of laying hands upon it.

Then he fell into such unaccountable fits of meditation, with his fork midway between his plate and his mouth; had his eyes attracted in such strange directions; was afflicted with such remarkable coughs; sat so far from the table; and dropped so much more than he ate, and pretended that he hadn't dropped it; that I was heartily glad when Herbert left us for the city.

I had neither the good sense nor the good feeling to know that this was all my fault, and that if I had been easier with Joe, Joe would have been easier with me. I felt impatient of him and out of temper with him.

8 "Us two being now alone, sir—" began Joe.

"Joe," I interrupted pettishly, "How can you call me sir?"

Joe looked at me for a single instant with something faintly like reproach. I was conscious of a sort of dignity in the look.

"Us two being now alone," resumed Joe, "and me having the intentions and abilities to stay not many minutes more, I will now conclude—leastways begin—to mention what

9 have led to my having had the present honor.

10 "Well, sir, this is how it were. I were at the Bargemen t'other night, Pip" (whenever he subsided into affection, he called me Pip, and whenever he relapsed into politeness he called me sir), "when there come up in his shay-cart Pumblechook. Well, Pip; this same identical

come to me at the Bargemen and his word were, 'Joseph, Miss Havisham she wish to speak to you!'"

"Miss Havisham, Joe?"

"'She wished,' were Pumblechook's word, 'to speak to you.'" Joe sat and rolled his eyes at the ceiling.

"Yes, Joe? Go on, please."

"Next day, sir," said Joe, looking at me as if I were a long way off, "having cleaned myself, I go and I see Miss A."<sup>3</sup>

"Miss A., Joe? Miss Havisham?"

11 "Which I say, sir," replied Joe, with an air of legal formality, as if he were making his will, "Miss A., or otherways Havisham. Her expression air then as follering: 'Mr. Gargery. You air in correspondence with Mr. Pip?' Having had a letter from you, I were able to say 'I am.' 'Would you tell him, then' said she, 'that which Estella has come home, and would be glad to see him.'"

I felt my face fire up as I looked at Joe.

"Biddy," pursued Joe, "when I got home and asked her fur to write the message to you, a little hung back. Biddy says, 'I know he will be very glad to have it by word of mouth; it is holiday time, you want to see him, go!' I have now concluded, sir," said Joe, rising from his chair, "and, Pip, I wish you ever well and ever prospering to a greater and greater height."

"But you are not going now, Joe?"

"Yes I am," said Joe.

"But you are coming back to dinner, Joe?"

"No I am not," said Joe.

Our eyes met, and all the "sir" melted out of that manly heart as he gave me his hand.

"Pip, dear old chap, life is made of ever so many partings welded together, as I may say, and one man's a blacksmith, and one's a white-smith,<sup>4</sup> and one's a goldsmith, and one's a cop-

3. Miss A.: Joe pronounces Havisham as "avisham."

4. whitesmith: a tinsmith.

7

Pip has found Joe's behavior embarrassing. He is relieved there is no longer a witness to his humiliation.

8

**Characterization.** Joe is attempting to behave in a manner appropriate to Pip's new status. Rules of etiquette demand that he call Pip "sir."

9

Joe tries to retain formality in their conversation by keeping it short and by using phrases like "the present honor" to describe his visit.

10

Dickens was concerned with evils of class system, and here he shows chilling effect of class differences on two people who were once close.

11

Joe's "air of legal formality" is humorous since he is conveying nothing more serious than an invitation to make social call. His stiffness results from his feeling awkward and uncomfortable.

12

Joe realizes that class “divisions” are pulling him and Pip apart; Joe seems clownish to Pip because Pip is placing social advancement above true friendship.

13

**Characterization.** Joe’s departure represents Pip’s most significant break with and most reprehensible betrayal of his old life and dearest friends. That Pip recognizes Joe’s worth and attempts to find him suggests that Pip has not totally abandoned his values. As is often the case with Pip, he acts too late.

## Chapter 22

1

Pip shows that it is one thing to feel repentant and another to behave accordingly.

2

**What “old reason” is Pip referring to?** The word *convict* reminds Pip of his childhood experience in graveyard.

3

Herbert is disgusted by prisoners because he judges them superficially. Most prisoners in 1800s were poor, often debtors unable to pay their bills.

12 persmith. Divisions among such must come, and must be met as they come. If there’s been any fault at all today, it’s mine. You and me is not two figures to be together in London; nor yet anywheres else but what is private, and bekknown, and understood among friends. It ain’t that I am proud, but that I want to be right, as you shall never see me no more in these clothes. I am wrong in these clothes. I’m wrong out of the forge, the kitchen, or off th’ meshes. You won’t find half so much fault in me if you think of me in my forge dress, with my hammer in my hand, or even my pipe. You won’t find half so much fault in me if, supposing as you should ever wish to see me, you come and put your head in at the forge window and see Joe the blacksmith, there at the old anvil, in the old burned apron, sticking to the old work. I’m awful dull, but I hope I’ve beat out something nigh the rights of this at lest. And so God bless you, dear old Pip, old chap, God bless you!”

13 I had not been mistaken in my fancy that there was a simple dignity in him. The fashion of his dress could no more come in its way when he spoke these words than it could come in its way in Heaven. He touched me gently on the forehead, and went out. As soon as I could recover myself sufficiently, I hurried out after him and looked for him in the neighboring streets; but he was gone.

## Chapter 22

*The mysterious stranger returns, and so does Orlick.*

It was clear that I must repair to our town next day, and in the first flow of my repentance it was equally clear that I must stay at Joe’s. But when I secured my box-place by tomorrow’s coach, I began to invent reasons for putting up

1 at the Blue Boar. All other swindlers upon earth are nothing to the self-swindlers, and with such pretenses did I cheat myself. I settled that I must go to the Blue Boar.

At that time it was customary to carry convicts down to the dockyards by stagecoach. As I had often seen them on the highroad dangling their ironed legs over the coach roof, I had no cause to be surprised when Herbert came up and told me there were two convicts going down with me. But I had a reason that was an old reason now for faltering whenever I heard the word convict.

“You don’t mind them, Handel?” said Herbert.

“Oh, no!”

“I thought you seemed as if you didn’t like them?”

“I can’t pretend that I do like them, and I suppose you don’t particularly. But I don’t mind them.”

3 “See! There they are,” said Herbert, “and what a degraded and vile sight it is!”

The two convicts were handcuffed together, and had irons on their legs—irons of a pattern that I knew well. They wore the dress that I likewise knew well. One was a taller and stouter man than the other, and his attire disguised him, but I knew his half-closed eye at one glance. There stood the man whom I had seen on the settle at the Three Jolly Bargemen on a Saturday night!

But this was not the worst of it. It came out that the whole of the back of the coach had been taken by a family, and that there were no places for the two prisoners but on the seat in front, behind the coachman. The convict I had recognized sat behind me with his breath on the hair of my head.

“Goodbye, Handel!” Herbert called out as we started. I thought what a blessed fortune it was that he had found another name for me than Pip.



The weather was miserably raw. I dozed off myself in considering the question whether I ought to restore a couple of pounds sterling to this creature before losing sight of him, and how it could best be done. In the act of dipping forward, I woke in a fright and took the question up again. Cowering forward for warmth and to make me a screen against the wind, the convicts were closer to me than before. The very first words I heard them interchange, as I became conscious, were the words of my own thought, "Two one-pound notes."

"How did he get 'em?" said the convict I had never seen.

"How should I know?" returned the other. "He had 'em stowed away somehows. Give him by friends, I expect."

"I wish," said the other, with a bitter curse upon the cold, "that I had 'em here."

"Two one-pound notes, or friends?"

"Two one-pound notes. I'd sell all the friends I ever had, for one, and think it a blessed good bargain. Well? So he says—?"

"So he says," resumed the convict I had recognized—"it was all said and done in half a minute, behind a pile of timber in the dockyards—'You're a-going to be discharged!'

Yes, I was. Would I find out that boy that had fed him and kep' his secret, and give him them two one-pound notes? Yes, I would. And I did."

"More fool you," growled the other. "I'd have spent 'em on wittles and drink. He must have been a green one. Mean to say he knowed nothing of you?"

"Not a ha'porth.<sup>1</sup> Different gangs and different ships. He was tried again for prison breaking, and got made a lifer."<sup>2</sup>

"And was that the only time you worked out, in this part of the country?"

"The only time."

"What might have been your opinion of the place?"

"A most beastly place. Mudbank, mist, swamp, and work; work, swamp, mist, and mudbank."

They both execrated the place in very strong language, and gradually growled themselves out, and had nothing left to say.

After overhearing this dialogue, I resolved to alight as soon as we touched the town and put myself out of his hearing. This device I executed successfully. As to the convicts, they went their way with the coach, and I knew at what point they would be spirited off to the river. In my fancy, I saw the boat with its convict crew waiting for them at the slime-washed stairs—again heard the gruff "Give way, you!" like an order to dogs—again saw the wicked Noah's Ark<sup>3</sup> lying out on the black water. I could not have said what I was afraid of, but there was great fear upon me.

Betimes in the morning I was up and out. It was too early yet to go to Miss Havisham's, so I loitered into the country on Miss Havisham's side of town—which was not Joe's side; I could go there tomorrow—thinking about my patroness, and painting brilliant pictures of her plans for me.

She had adopted Estella, she had as good as adopted me, and it could not fail to be her intention to bring us together. I loved Estella with the love of a man; I loved her simply because I found her irresistible. I knew to my sorrow, often and often, if not always, that I loved her against reason, against promise, against peace, against hope, against happiness, against all discouragement that could be. I loved her none the less because I knew it, and it had no more influence in restraining me than if I had devoutly believed her to be human perfection.

3. **Noah's Ark:** the Hulks, the prison boat.

1. **ha'porth:** ha'penny worth; in other words, very little.  
2. **got made a lifer:** was sentenced to life imprisonment.

4

**Suspense.** Dickens uses dramatic coincidences to arouse reader's curiosity, as with sudden echoing of Pip's thoughts in words of convict.

5

*Who is the boy? Pip.*

6

**Allusion.** Reference to Noah's Ark is ironic; Biblical ark preserved humanity whereas this "ark" imprisons humanity.

7

**Characterization.** One of Pip's primary character traits, his absolute and unreasoning faith in his "expectations," is captured in this passage. This certainty is later matched by equally intense disillusionment at loss of his "expectations."

8

Orlick's puns simultaneously reveal and hide his malice. Dickens uses humor for different purposes, as is seen in the difference between Orlick's punning and Joe's awkward behavior during his visit to Pip's apartment.

9

Distance and disparity Pip feels is similar to distance and disparity that class system imposes on people: Joe and Pip, convict and free person, poor and rich. Estella is inaccessible from Pip's world.

10

Irony. In trying to wreak vengeance on men, Miss Havisham has hardened Estella's heart, making Estella into a beautiful but deadly siren who destroys men.

11

Dismal surroundings in which Pip courts Estella are, in a sense, appropriate; Pip's love for Estella is also doomed to ruin.

I so shaped out my walk as to arrive at the gate at my old time. I heard the side door open, and steps come across the courtyard, and started to find myself confronted by a man in a sober gray dress—the last man I should have expected to see in that place of porter at Miss Havisham's door.

"Orlick!"

"Ah, young master, there's more changes than yours. But come in, come in. It's opposed to my orders to hold the gate open."

I entered and he swung it, and locked it, and took the key out. "Yes!" said he, facing round. "Here I am!"

8 "How did you come here?"

"I come here," he retorted, "on my legs."

"Are you here for good?"

"I ain't here for harm, young master, I suppose."

I was not so sure of that. "Then you have left the forge?" I said.

"Do this look like a forge?" replied Orlick.

I had gone up the staircase in the dark, many a time. I ascended it now and tapped in my old way at the door of Miss Havisham's room. "Pip's rap," I heard her say, immediately; "come in, Pip."

She was in her chair near the old table, in the old dress, with her two hands crossed on her stick, her chin resting on them. Sitting near her was an elegant lady whom I had never seen.

"Come in, Pip," Miss Havisham continued. "Come in, Pip. How do you do, Pip? So you kiss my hand as if I were a queen, eh?—Well?"

"I heard, Miss Havisham," said I, rather at a loss, "that you were so kind as to wish me to come and see you, and I came directly."

"Well?"

The lady whom I had never seen before lifted up her eyes and looked archly at me, and then I saw that the eyes were Estella's eyes. But she was so much changed, was so much more

9 beautiful, so much more womanly, that I slipped hopelessly back into the coarse and common boy again. Oh, the sense of distance and disparity that came upon me, and the inaccessibility that came about her!

"Do you find her much changed, Pip?" asked Miss Havisham, with her greedy look, and striking her stick upon a chair that stood between them as a sign for me to sit down there.

"When I came in, Miss Havisham, I thought there was nothing of Estella in the face or figure; but now it all settles down so curiously into the old——"

10 "What? You are not going to say into the old Estella?" Miss Havisham interrupted. "She was proud and insulting, and you wanted to go away from her. Don't you remember?"

I said confusedly that that was long ago, and that I knew no better then. Estella smiled with perfect composure and said she had no doubt of my having been quite right, and of her having been very disagreeable.

"Is *he* changed?" Miss Havisham asked her.

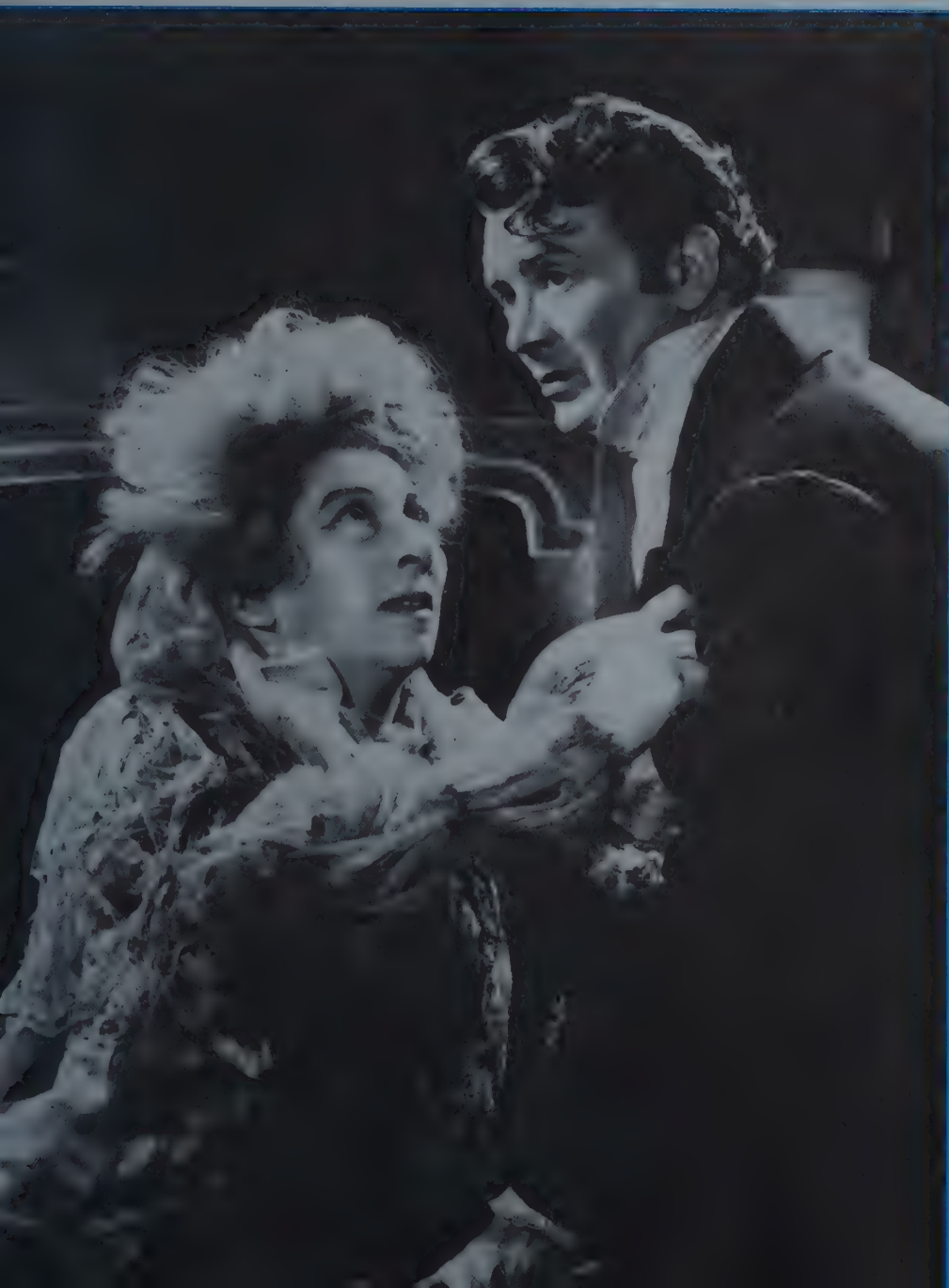
"Very much," said Estella, looking at me.

"Less coarse and common?" said Miss Havisham, playing with Estella's hair.

Estella laughed. She treated me as a boy still, but she lured me on.

It was settled that I should stay there all the rest of the day, and return to the hotel at night, and to London tomorrow. When we had conversed for a while, Miss Havisham sent us two out to walk. Estella and I went into the garden, I trembling in spirit and worshipping the very hem of her dress; she quite composed and decidedly not worshipping the hem of mine.

11 As the garden was too overgrown and rank for walking, we came out again into the brewery yard. I showed her where I had seen her walking that first old day, and she said with a cold and careless look in that direction, "Did I?" I reminded her where she had come out of the house and given me my meat and drink,



### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Exploring the Subject**

This picture captures the spiritually and physically disheveled Miss Havisham. Her conversation with Pip unravels his desire to be a stoic gentleman; his face and tense hand reveal his emotional strain.

#### **Relating Expression Skills**

Have students write the script for a modern version of this scene. Whom would they cast as Estella, Pip, and Miss Havisham? Why? What music would be appropriate for this scene? How would the characters be dressed?



12

**Conflict.** Pip's pain has its origins in conflict between his dreams of Estella's love and reality of her heartlessness.

13

Estella views sentiment and sympathy as nonsense, underscoring the fact that she has "no heart."

14

**Characterization.** Her words reflect the intensity of her obsession. Estella has been brought up not only, as Miss Havisham says, "that she might be loved," but also so that Estella will be unable to return any love offered her.

15

Miss Havisham's appearance (her "shroud of a dress") and her movements (striking out as if she would kill herself) remind reader that Miss Havisham is already dead in spirit.

and she said, "I don't remember." "Not remember that you made me cry?" said I. "No," said she, and shook her head and looked about her. I verily believe that her not remembering and not minding in the least made me cry again, inwardly—and that is the sharpest crying of all.

"You must know," said Estella, condescending to me as a brilliant and beautiful woman might, "that I have no heart—if that has anything to do with my memory. I have no softness there, no—sympathy—sentiment—nonsense. If we are to be thrown much together, you had better believe it at once."

Her handsome dress had trailed upon the ground. She held it in one hand now, and with the other lightly touched my shoulder as we walked. We walked round the ruined garden twice or thrice more. At last we went back into the house, and there I heard with surprise that my guardian had come down to see Miss Havisham on business, and would come back to dinner. Estella left us to prepare herself, and Miss Havisham turned to me and said in a whisper.

"Is she beautiful, graceful, well grown? Do you admire her?"

"Everybody must who sees her, Miss Havisham."

She put an arm around my neck and drew my head close down to hers as she sat in the chair. "Love her, love her, love her! How does she use you?"

Before I could answer (if I could have answered so difficult a question at all), she repeated, "Love her, love her, love her! If she favors you, love her. If she wounds you, love her. If she tears your heart to pieces—and as it gets older and stronger it will tear deeper—love her, love her! Hear me, Pip! I adopted her to be loved. I bred her and educated her to be loved. I developed her into what she is, that she might be loved. Love her!

"I'll tell you," said she in the same hurried passionate whisper, "what real love is. It is blind devotion, unquestioning self-humiliation, utter submission, trust and belief against yourself and against the whole world, giving up your whole heart and soul to the smiter—as I did!"

She rose up in the chair, in her shroud of a dress, and struck at the air as if she would as soon have struck herself against the wall and fallen dead. All this passed in a few seconds. As I drew her down into her chair, I turned and saw my guardian in the room.

Miss Havisham had seen him as soon as I, and was (like everybody else) afraid of him. She made a strong attempt to compose herself, and stammered that he was as punctual as ever.

"As punctual as ever," he repeated. "And so you are here, Pip?"

I told him when I had arrived, and how Miss Havisham wished me to come and see Estella.

"Well, Pip! How often have you seen Miss Estella before?" said he.

"How often?"

"Jaggers," interposed Miss Havisham, much to my relief; "leave my Pip alone, and go with him to your dinner."

He complied, and we groped our way down the dark stairs together.

"Pray, sir," said I, "may I ask you a question?"

"You may," said he, "and I may decline to answer it. Put your question."

"Estella's name, is it Havisham or—?" I had nothing to add.

"Or what?" said he.

"Is it Havisham?"

"It is Havisham."

This brought us to the dinner table, where she and Sarah Pocket awaited us. Mr. Jaggers scarcely directed his eyes to Estella's face once

during dinner. When she spoke to him, he listened, and in due course answered, but never looked at her that I could see. On the other hand, she often looked at him, with interest and curiosity, if not distrust, but his face never showed the least consciousness.

Afterward we went up to Miss Havisham's room, and we four played at whist.<sup>4</sup> We played until nine o'clock, and then it was arranged that when Estella came to London I should be forewarned of her coming and should meet her at the coach; and then I took leave of her, and touched her and left her.

My guardian slept at the Boar in the next room to mine. Far into the night, Miss Havisham's words, "Love her, love her, love her!" sounded in my ears. I said to my pillow, "I love her, I love her, I love her!" hundreds of times.

**16** Ah me! I thought those were high and great emotions. But I never thought there was anything low and small in my keeping away from Joe, because I knew she would be contemptuous of him. It was but a day gone, and Joe had brought the tears into my eyes; they had soon dried, God forgive me! soon dried.

## Chapter 23

*Trabb's boy has some fun with Pip.*

After well considering the matter while I was dressing at the Blue Boar in the morning, I resolved to tell my guardian that I doubted Orlick's being the right sort of man to fill a post of trust at Miss Havisham's. He listened in a satisfied manner while I told him what knowledge I had of Orlick. "Very good, Pip," he observed, when I had concluded. "I'll go round presently and pay our friend off."

**4. whist** (hwist): a card game, the forerunner of bridge.

Rather alarmed by this summary action, I was for a little delay, and even hinted that our friend himself might be difficult to deal with.

**1** "Oh, no, he won't," said my guardian. "I should like to see him argue the question with *me*."

As we were going back together to London by the midday coach, and as I breakfasted under such terrors of Pumblechook that I could scarcely hold my cup, this gave me an opportunity of saying that I wanted a walk, and that I would go on along the London road while Mr. Jaggers was occupied, if he would let the coachman know that I would get into my place when overtaken. I was thus enabled to fly from the Blue Boar immediately after breakfast. By then making a loop of about a couple of miles into the open country at the back of Pumblechook's premises, I got round into the High Street again, a little beyond that pitfall, and felt myself in comparative security.

It was interesting to be in the quiet old town once more, and it was not disagreeable to be here and there suddenly recognized and **2** stared after. My position was a distinguished one, and I was not at all dissatisfied with it, until Fate threw me in the way of that unlimited miscreant, Trabb's boy.

**3** Casting my eyes along the street at a certain point of my progress, I beheld Trabb's boy approaching. Suddenly the knees of Trabb's boy smote together, his hair uprose, his cap fell off, he staggered out into the road, and crying to the populace, "Hold me! I'm so frightened!" feigned to be in a paroxysm of terror occasioned by the dignity of my appearance. As I passed him, his teeth loudly chattered in his head, and with every mark of extreme humiliation, he prostrated himself in the dust.

This was a hard thing to bear, but this was nothing. I had not advanced another two hundred yards, when, to my inexpressible amazement and indignation, I again beheld Trabb's

**16**

Statement implies that Pip no longer thinks the love he felt was "high and great."

## Chapter 23

**1**

**Characterization.** For all his bad traits, Jaggers is at times a strong and useful ally.

**2**

**Why is Pip pleased with his position and the attention it draws?** Responses will vary. Pip, proud of his advancement, secretly feels superior to lower-class people he left behind when he moved to London.

**3**

Like a jester, Trabb's boy deflates Pip's seriousness and exposes his absurdity.

4

The humor of boy's charade arises from difference between his pretended awe of Pip's elegance and his underlying scorn of Pip's pretentiousness.

5

That Trabb's boy's mockery can draw crowd of delighted friends highlights lower class's disdain for upper class.

6

Trabb's boy succeeds in undermining Pip's sense of self-importance.

7

**Characterization.** Herbert is voice of reason, describing Pip as having a healthy mixture of traits.

boy approaching. He was coming round a narrow corner. He staggered round and round me with knees more afflicted, and with uplifted hands as if beseeching for mercy. His sufferings were hailed with the greatest joy by a knot of spectators, and I felt utterly confounded.

I had not got as much farther down the street as the post office when I again beheld Trabb's boy shooting round by a back way attended by a company of delighted young friends to whom he exclaimed, with a wave of his hand, "Don't know yah!" The disgrace attendant on his immediately afterwards taking to crowing and pursuing me across the bridge, culminated the disgrace with which I left town.

The coach, with Mr. Jaggers inside, came up in due time, and I took my box-seat again, and arrived in London safe—but not sound, for my heart was gone. As soon as I arrived, I sent a penitential codfish and a barrel of oysters to Joe (as reparation for not having gone myself), and then went on to Barnard's Inn.

I found Herbert dining on cold meat, and delighted to welcome me back, and I felt that I must open my breast that very evening to my friend and chum. Dinner done and we sitting with our feet upon the fender, I said to Herbert, "My dear Herbert, I have something very particular to tell you."

"My dear Handel," he returned, "I shall respect your confidence."

"It concerns myself, Herbert," said I, "and one other person."

Herbert looked at the fire with his head on one side, and looked at me because I didn't go on.

"Herbert," said I, laying my hand upon his knee. "I love—I adore—Estella. I have never left off adoring her. And she has come back, a most beautiful and most elegant creature. And I saw her yesterday. And if I adored her be-

fore, I now doubly adore her."

"Lucky for you then, Handel," said Herbert, "that you are picked out for her and allotted to her. Have you any idea yet of Estella's views on the adoration question?"

I shook my head gloomily. "Oh! She is thousands of miles away from me," said I.

"Patience, my dear Handel; time enough, time enough. But you have something more to say?"

"I am ashamed to say it," I returned, "and yet it's no worse to say it than to think it. You call me a lucky fellow. Of course, I am. I was a blacksmith's boy but yesterday; I am—what shall I say I am—today?"

"Say a good fellow, if you want a phrase," returned Herbert, smiling, "a good fellow, with impetuosity and hesitation, boldness and diffidence, action and dreaming, curiously mixed in him."

"Herbert," I went on, "you say I am lucky, and yet, when I think of Estella, I cannot tell you how dependent and uncertain I feel. I may say that on the constancy of one person (naming no person) all my expectations depend. And at the best, how indefinite and unsatisfactory, only to know so vaguely what they are!"

"Now, Handel," Herbert replied, in his gay, hopeful way, "it seems to me that we are looking into our gift horse's mouth with a magnifying glass. Didn't you tell me that your guardian, Mr. Jaggers, told you in the beginning that you were not endowed with expectations only? And even if he had not told you so, could you believe that of all men in London, Mr. Jaggers is the man to hold his present relations toward you unless he was sure of his ground?"

"What a hopeful disposition you have!" said I, gratefully admiring his cheery ways.

"I ought to have," said Herbert, "for I have not much else. And now, I want to make myself seriously disagreeable to you for a moment—



positively repulsive.”

“You won’t succeed,” said I.

“Oh, yes, I shall!” said he. “I have been thinking that Estella cannot surely be a condition of your inheritance, if she was never referred to by your guardian. Am I right in so understanding what you have told me, as that he never referred to her, directly or indirectly, in any way? Never even hinted, for instance, that your patron might have views as to your marriage ultimately?”

“Never.”

“Now, Handel, I am quite free from the flavor of sour grapes, upon my soul and honor! Not being bound to her, can you not detach yourself from her?—I told you I should be disagreeable.”

**8** I turned my head aside, for, with a rush and a sweep, a feeling like that which had subdued me on the morning when I left the forge, smote upon my heart again. There was silence between us for a little while.

“My dear Handel,” Herbert went on, “think of her bringing-up, and think of Miss Havisham. Think of what she is herself. This may lead to miserable things.”

“I know it, Herbert,” said I, with my head still turned away, “but I can’t help it.”

“Well!” said Herbert, getting up with a lively shake as if he had been asleep, and stirring the **9** fire. “Now I’ll endeavor to make myself agreeable again! I was going to say a word or two, Handel, concerning my father and my father’s son. May I ask you if you have ever had an opportunity of remarking that the children of not exactly suitable marriages are always most particularly anxious to be married? Indeed, I think we are all engaged, except the baby.”

“Then you are?” said I.

“I am,” said Herbert; “but it’s a secret.”

“May I ask the name?” I said.

“Name of Clara,” said Herbert.

“Live in London?”

“Yes. Her father had to do with the victualing<sup>1</sup> of passenger ships. I think he was a species of purser.”

“Where is he now?” said I.

“He’s an invalid now,” replied Herbert. “I have never seen him, for he has always kept his room overhead since I have known Clara. But I have heard him constantly. He makes tremendous rows—roars, and pegs at the floor with some frightful instrument.” In looking at me and then laughing heartily, Herbert for the time recovered his usual hearty manner.

“Don’t you expect to see him?” said I.

“Oh, yes, I constantly expect to see him,” returned Herbert, “because I never hear him, without expecting him to come tumbling through the ceiling. But I don’t know how long the rafters may hold.”

When he had once more laughed heartily, he became meek and told me that the moment he began to realize Capital,<sup>2</sup> it was his intention to marry this young lady. He added, “But you **10** can’t marry, you know, while you’re looking about you.”

## Chapter 24

*Estella arrives in London.*

One day when I was busy with my books and Mr. Pocket, I received a note by the post. It had no set beginning, as Dear Mr. Pip, or Dear Pip, or Dear Sir, or Dear Anything, but ran thus:

I am to come to London the day after tomorrow by the midday coach. I believe it was settled you should meet me? At all events Miss Havisham has that impression, and I write in obedience to it. She sends you her regard.

—Yours, ESTELLA.

1. **victualing**: supplying of food (victuals).

2. **realize Capital**: obtain some money.

### 8

**Foreshadowing.** Recurrence of this feeling foreshadows its eventual domination of Pip’s sentiments.

### 9

**Irony.** Contrary to Herbert’s belief, the news of his betrothal will probably make Pip even more unhappy. Pip will see in Herbert the love and happiness he longs for but does not have.

### 10

Herbert, like Pip, is coming to understand his tendency to believe in illusions. Herbert dreams about making money rather than actually taking action to find lucrative position.

## Chapter 24

1

Herbert's sobering words about Estella have obviously had little effect on Pip.

2

**Irony.** Indeed, Miss Havisham has changed Estella to make her more appealing—not to please Pip's eyes and soul but to break his heart.

3

**Characterization.** Estella is still a passive instrument of Miss Havisham. In Richmond she is to be taken about, introduced to others, and shown around.

4

**Why does Estella think Pip's words are "nonsense"?** Estella uses word "nonsense" quite literally. She does not understand Pip's declarations of love because she has no way to understand what he means.

5

Gossip is more important and interesting to Estella than Pip's declarations of love.

My appetite vanished instantly, and I knew no peace or rest until the day arrived. Then I was worse than ever, and began haunting the coach offices in Wood Street, Cheapside, before the coach had left the Blue Boar in our town. I felt as if it were not safe to let the coach office be out of my sight longer than five minutes at a time, and in this condition of unreason I performed the first half-hour of a watch of four or five hours.

In her furred traveling dress, Estella seemed more delicately beautiful than she had ever seemed yet, even in my eyes. Her manner was more winning than before, and I thought I saw Miss Havisham's influence in the change.

"I am going to Richmond," she told me. "The distance is ten miles. I am to have a carriage, and you are to take me. This is my purse, and you are to pay my charges out of it. Oh, you must take the purse! We have no choice, you and I, but to obey our instructions. We are not free to follow our own devices, you and I."

As she looked at me in giving me the purse, I hoped there was an inner meaning in her words. She said them slightly, but not with displeasure.

"A carriage will have to be sent for, Estella. Will you rest here a little?"

"Yes, I am to rest here a little, and I am to drink some tea, and you are to take care of me the while."

She drew her arm through mine, as if it must be done, and I requested a waiter to show us a private sitting room. Upon that, he pulled out a napkin, as if it were a magic clue without which he couldn't find the way upstairs, and led us to the black hole of the establishment. On my objecting to this retreat, he took us into another room with a dinner table for thirty. I was sensible that the air of this chamber, in its strong combination of stable with soup stock, might have led one to infer that the coaching department was not doing well, and that the

enterprising proprietor was boiling down the horses for the refreshment department. Yet the room was all in all to me, Estella being in it. I thought that with her I could have been happy there for life. (I was not at all happy there at the time, observe, and I knew it well.)

"Where are you going to, at Richmond?" I asked Estella.

3 "I am going to live," said she, "at a great expense, with a lady there, who has the power—or says she has—of taking me about and introducing me and showing people to me and showing me to people. How do you thrive with Mr. Pocket?"

"I live quite pleasantly there; at least——" It appeared to me that I was losing a chance.

"At least?" repeated Estella.

"As pleasantly as I could anywhere, away from you."

4 "You silly boy," said Estella, quite composedly, "how can you talk such nonsense? Your friend Mr. Matthew, I believe, is superior to the rest of his family?"

"Very superior indeed."

"He really is disinterested, and above small jealousy and spite I have heard?"

"I am sure I have every reason to say so."

"You have not every reason to say so of the rest of his people," said Estella, "for they beset Miss Havisham with reports to your disadvantage. They watch you, misrepresent you, write letters about you (anonymous sometimes), and you are the torment and occupation of their lives. You can scarcely realize the hatred those people feel for you."

"They do me no harm, I hope?"

5 "No, no, you may be sure of that," said Estella. "Oh, what satisfaction it gives me to see those people thwarted! Two things I can tell you. First, these people never will impair your ground with Miss Havisham, in any particular, great or small. Second, I am beholden to you as the cause of their being so busy and so mean

in vain, and there is my hand upon it."

6 As she gave it me playfully, I held it and put it to my lips. "You ridiculous boy," said Estella, "will you never take warning? Or do you kiss my hand in the same spirit in which I once let you kiss my cheek?"

"If I say yes, may I kiss the cheek again?"

"You should have asked before you touched the hand. But, yes, if you like."

7 I leaned down, and her calm face was like a statue's. "Now," said Estella, gliding away the instant I touched her cheek, "you are to take care that I have some tea, and you are to take me to Richmond."

Her reverting to this tone as if our association were forced upon us and we were mere puppets, gave me pain; but everything in our intercourse did give me pain. Whatever her tone with me happened to be, I could put no trust in it, and build no hope on it; and yet I went on against trust and against hope. Why repeat it a thousand times? So it always was.

9 I rang for the tea, and the waiter brought in by degrees some fifty adjuncts to that refreshment, but of tea not a glimpse. A teaboard, cups and saucers, plates, knives and forks, spoons, saltcellars, a meek little muffin confined with the utmost precaution under a strong iron cover, a fat family urn. After a prolonged absence he came in with a casket of precious appearance containing twigs. These I steeped in hot water and extracted one cup of I don't know what, for Estella.

The bill paid, and the waiter remembered, 11 and the chambermaid taken into consideration—in a word, the whole house bribed into a state of contempt and animosity, and Estella's purse much lightened—we got into our post coach and drove away. Turning into Cheapside and rattling up Newgate Street, we were soon under the walls of which I was so ashamed.<sup>1</sup>

1. the walls . . . ashamed: Newgate Prison.

"Mr. Jaggers," said I, "has the reputation of being more in the secrets of that dismal place than any man in London."

10 "He is more in the secrets of every place, I think," said Estella, in a low voice.

"You have been accustomed to see him often, I suppose?"

"I have been accustomed to see him at uncertain intervals ever since I can remember. But I know him no better now than I did before I could speak plainly. What is your own experience of him?"

"Once habituated to his distrustful manner," said I, "I have done very well."

"Are you intimate?"

"I have dined with him at his private house."

"I fancy," said Estella, shrinking, "that must be a curious place."

"It is a curious place."

I should have been chary<sup>2</sup> of discussing my guardian too freely even with her; but I should have gone on with the subject so far as to describe the dinner in Gerrard Street, if we had not then come into a sudden glare of gas.<sup>3</sup> When we were out of it, we fell into other talk, principally about the way by which we were traveling and about London.

It was impossible for me to avoid seeing that she cared to attract me; that she made herself winning; and would have won me even if the task had needed pains. Yet this made me none the happier, for I felt that she held my heart in her hand because she willfully chose to do it, and not because it would have wrung any tenderness in her to crush it and throw it away.

When we passed through Hammersmith, I showed her where Mr. Matthew Pocket lived, and said it was no great way from Richmond, and that I hoped I should see her sometimes.

2. chary (châr'ê): hesitant, cautious.

3. gas: gaslight.

6

**Irony.** Estella is at her kindest and most thoughtful as she warns Pip to stay away from her.

7

**Simile.** Estella's face is as unaffected by Pip's kiss as statue's would be. Estella does not have the ability to love, hate, or act independently.

8

Pip's acceptance of his painful association with Estella shows the strength of his obsession.

9

Description of the serving of one cup of tea and one muffin shows Pip's discomfort with the rituals of the class he wishes to join.

10

Jaggers' personality is so overbearing that even Estella is intimidated.

11

Despite her upbringing, Estella wants Pip's love, but her heartlessness prevents her from returning it.



12

**Foreshadowing.** Estella's sigh is early clue that she resents Miss Havisham.

13

In his misery, Pip sees the doorway as a living thing that absorbs the passive Estella.

## Chapter 25

1

**How might Pip's mood be described? What events have caused this mood?** Responses will vary. His mood might be described as introspective, contemplative, or guilty. He feels this way because he has treated Joe badly and acted condescendingly toward Biddy.

2

**Characterization.** In his pursuit of "expectations," Pip causes harm to all who truly care for him, including Joe and Biddy, and now Herbert.

3

Association between Herbert's despondency and his talk of going to America reflects Dickens' negative views about the country. His book *American Notes* includes harsh observations about manners and life in the U.S.

"Oh, yes, you are to see me; you are to come when you think proper; you are to be mentioned to the family; indeed you are already mentioned."

I inquired was it a large household she was going to be a member of?

"No, there are only two, mother and daughter. The mother is a lady of some station, though not averse to increasing her income."

"I wonder Miss Havisham could part with you again so soon."

12 "It is a part of Miss Havisham's plans for me, Pip," said Estella, with a sigh, as if she were tired. "I am to write to her constantly and see her regularly, and report how I go on—I and the jewels—for they are nearly all mine now."

It was the first time she had ever called me by name. Of course she did so purposely, and knew that I should treasure it up.

We came to Richmond all too soon, and at our destination two cherry-colored maids came

13 fluttering out to receive Estella. The doorway soon absorbed her boxes, and she gave me her hand and a smile, and said good night, and was absorbed likewise. And still I stood looking at the house, thinking how happy I should be if I lived there with her, and knowing that I never was happy with her, but always miserable.

## Chapter 25

*Pip and Herbert examine their affairs.*

1 As I had grown accustomed to my expectations, I had insensibly begun to notice their effect upon myself and those around me. Their influence on my own character I disguised from my recognition as much as possible, but I knew very well that it was not all good. I lived in a state of chronic uneasiness respecting my behavior to Joe. My conscience was not by any

means comfortable about Biddy. When I woke up in the night I used to think, with a weariness in my spirits, that I should have been happier and better if I had never seen Miss Havisham's face, and had risen to manhood content to be partners with Joe in the honest old forge. Many a time of an evening, when I sat alone looking at the fire, I thought, after all, there was no fire like the forge fire and the kitchen fire at home.

2 Now, concerning the influence of my position on others, I perceived it was not beneficial to anybody, and above all, that it was not beneficial to Herbert. My lavish habits led his easy nature into expenses that he could not afford, corrupted the simplicity of his life, and disturbed his peace with anxieties and regrets. I began to contract a quantity of debt. I could hardly begin but Herbert must begin too, so he soon followed.

In my confidence in my own resources, I would willingly have taken Herbert's expenses on myself; but Herbert was proud, and I could make no such proposal to him. So he got into difficulties in every direction, and continued to look about him. When we gradually fell into keeping late hours and late company, I noticed that he looked about him with a desponding eye at breakfast time; that he began to look about him more hopefully about midday; that he drooped when he came in to dinner; that he seemed to decry<sup>1</sup> Capital in the distance rather clearly after dinner; that he all but realized Capital toward midnight; and that about two o'clock in the morning he became so deeply despondent again as to talk of buying a rifle and going to America, with a general purpose of compelling buffaloes to make his fortune.

We spent as much money as we could, and got as little for it as people could make up their

1. *decry* (di-skrī'): see.

minds to give us. We were always more or less miserable, and most of our acquaintance were  
4 in the same condition. There was a gay fiction among us that we were constantly enjoying ourselves, and a skeleton truth that we never did. To the best of my belief, our case was in the last aspect a rather common one.

At certain times I would say to Herbert, as if it were a remarkable discovery:

"My dear Herbert, we are getting on badly."

"My dear Handel," Herbert would say to me, in all sincerity, "if you will believe me, those very words were on my lips, by a strange coincidence."

"Then, Herbert," I would respond, "let us look into our affairs."

5 We always derived profound satisfaction from making an appointment for this purpose. Dinner over, we produced a bundle of pens, a copious supply of ink, and a goodly show of writing and blotting paper. For there was something very comfortable in having plenty of stationery.

I would then take a sheet of paper, and write across the top of it, in a neat hand, the heading, "Memorandum of Pip's debts." Herbert would also take a sheet of paper, and write across it, "Memorandum of Herbert's debts."

Each of us would then refer to a confused heap of papers at his side. The sound of our pens going refreshed us exceedingly, inasmuch that I sometimes found it difficult to distinguish between this edifying business proceeding and actually paying the money.

When we had written a little while, I would ask Herbert how he got on.

"They are mounting up, Handel," Herbert would say; "upon my life they are mounting up."

"Be firm, Herbert," I would retort. "Look the thing in the face. Look into your affairs."

6 Stare them out of countenance."

"So I would, Handel, only they are staring *me* out of countenance."

7 However, my determined manner would have its effect, and Herbert would fall to work again. After a time he would give up once more, on the plea that he had not got Cobbs's bill, or Lobbs's, or Nobbs's, as the case might be.

"Then, Herbert, estimate; estimate it in round numbers, and put it down."

8 "What a fellow of resource you are!" my friend would reply, with admiration. "Really, your business powers are very remarkable."

I thought so too. I established with myself, on these occasions, the reputation of a first-rate man of business—prompt, decisive, energetic, clear, cool-headed. When I had got all my responsibilities down upon my list, I compared each with the bill, and ticked it off. My self-approval when I ticked an entry was quite a luxurious sensation. When I had no more ticks to make, I folded all my bills up uniformly, docketed<sup>2</sup> each on the back, and tied the whole into a symmetrical bundle. Then I did the same for Herbert (who modestly said he had not my administrative genius), and felt that I had brought his affairs into focus for him.

But there was a calm, a rest, a virtuous hush, consequent on these examinations of our affairs, that gave me, for the time, an admirable opinion of myself. Soothed by my exertions, my method, and Herbert's compliments, I would sit with his symmetrical bundle and my own on the table before me among the stationery, and feel like a bank of some sort, rather than a private individual.

We shut our outer door on these solemn occasions in order that we might not be interrupted. I had fallen into my serene state one evening, when we heard a letter drop through

4 Pip and Herbert are attempting to deceive themselves about their situation.

5 Irony. Overabundance of supplies and flurry of activity contrast sharply with their lack of self-control.

6 "Stare them out of countenance" is obsolete phrase meaning to embarrass or to cause one to lose composure. In this case, Pip encourages Herbert to face up to his affairs and treat them in such a way that would make them seem less intimidating.

7 Irony. Pip begins this self-examination in attempt to undo negative effects of his presence on Herbert. He succeeds only in driving himself further into destructive self-delusion.

8 Why is Herbert's compliment so astonishing? How do we know? Pip has few, if any, "business powers." If Pip had such remarkable business powers, he would control his spending to stay out of debt.

2. docketed: labeled.

## Chapter 26

1

**Why does Pip say Joe is “entangled in” rather than “wearing” his cloak?** “Entangled” suggests that Joe is unaccustomed to formal wear and, in his grief, is made even more miserable by the mourning cloak.

2

That mourners have to be reminded of their handkerchiefs suggests that few people are sad to see Pip’s sister go.

3

**Imagery.** Singing larks and “beautiful shadows of clouds and trees” provide an ironic contrast to Pip’s sister’s life and suggest inability of this death to cast gloom.

4

Joe is still uncomfortable with Pip’s gentility and shows same forced “propriety” he displayed when he visited Pip in London.

5

**Irony.** Still feeling superior to Joe, Pip takes pride in spending the night, although Pip’s sense of obligation, not his inclination, demands that he stay.

the slit in the said door and fall on the ground. “It’s for you, Handel,” said Herbert, going out and coming back with it, “and I hope there is nothing the matter.” This was in allusion to its heavy black seal and border.

The letter was signed TRABB & CO., and its contents were to inform me that Mrs. J. Gargery had departed this life on Monday last at twenty minutes past six in the evening, and that my attendance was requested at the interment on Monday next at three o’clock in the afternoon.

## Chapter 26

*Pip returns to the forge.*

It was the first time that a grave had opened in my road of life, and the figure of my sister in her chair by the kitchen fire haunted me night and day. Whatever my fortunes might have been, I could scarcely have recalled my sister with much tenderness. But I suppose there is a shock of regret which may exist without much tenderness. I went down early in the morning and alighted at the Blue Boar, in good time to walk over to the forge. At last I came within sight of the house, and saw that Trabb and Co.

1 had taken possession. Poor dear Joe, entangled in a little black cloak tied in a large bow under his chin, was seated apart at the upper end of the room, where, as chief mourner, he had evidently been stationed by Trabb. When I bent down and said to him, “Dear Joe, how are you?” he said, “Pip, old chap, you know’d her when she were a fine figure of a—” and clasped my hand and said no more.

Biddy, looking very neat and modest in her black dress, went quietly here and there, and was very helpful. When I had spoken to Biddy, as I thought it not a time for talking, I went and sat down near Joe.

“Pocket handkerchiefs out, all!” cried Mr.

Trabb at this point, in a depressed businesslike voice—“Pocket handkerchiefs out! We are ready!”

So, we all put our pocket handkerchiefs to our faces and filed out two and two; Joe and I, Biddy and Pumblechook, Mr. and Mrs. Hubble, the remains of my poor sister being carried by six bearers.

We went through the village, and now the range of marshes lay clear before us, and we went into the churchyard, close to the graves of my unknown parents, Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and Also Georgiana, Wife of the  
3 Above. And there my sister was laid quietly in the earth while the larks sang high above it, and the light wind strewed it with beautiful shadows of clouds and trees.

When we got back and when they were all gone, Biddy, Joe, and I had a cold dinner together; but we dined in the best parlor, not in the old kitchen, and Joe was so exceedingly particular what he did with his knife and fork and the saltcellar and what not, that there was  
4 great restraint upon us. But after dinner, when I made him take his pipe, and when I had loitered with him about the forge, and when we sat down together on the great block of stone outside it, we got on better.

5 He was very much pleased by my asking if I might sleep in my own little room, and I was pleased too; for I felt that I had done rather a great thing in making the request.

When the shadows of evening were closing in, I took an opportunity of getting into the garden with Biddy for a little talk.

“Biddy,” said I, “I think you might have written to me about these sad matters.”

“Do you, Mr. Pip?” said Biddy. “I should have written if I had thought that.”

She was so quiet, and had such an orderly, good, and pretty way with her that I did not like the thought of making her cry again. After looking a little at her downcast eyes as she



walked beside me, I gave up that point.

"I suppose it will be difficult for you to remain here now, Biddy, dear?"

"Oh! I can't do so, Mr. Pip," said Biddy, in a tone of regret, but still of quiet conviction. "I have been speaking to Mrs. Hubble, and I am going to her tomorrow. I hope we shall be able to take some care of Mr. Gargery together until he settles down."

6 "How are you going to live, Biddy? If you want any more——"

7 "How am I going to live?" repeated Biddy, striking in, with a momentary flush upon her face. "I'll tell you, Mr. Pip. I am going to try to get the place of mistress in the new school nearly finished here. I can be well recommended by all the neighbors, and I hope I can be industrious and patient, and teach myself while I teach others. The new schools are not like the old, but I learned a good deal from you after that time, and have had time since then to improve."

"I think you would always improve, Biddy, under any circumstances." I walked a little farther with Biddy, looking silently at her downcast eyes. "I have not heard the particulars of my sister's death, Biddy."

"They are very slight, poor thing. She had been in one of her bad states for four days, when she came out of it in the evening, just at teatime, and said quite plainly, 'Joe.' As she had never said any word for a long while, I ran and fetched in Mr. Gargery from the forge. She made signs to me that she wanted him to sit down close to her, and wanted me to put her arms around his neck. So I put them round his neck, and she laid her head down on his shoulder quite content and satisfied. And so she presently said 'Joe' again, and once 'Pardon,' and once 'Pip.' And so she never lifted her head up any more, and it was just an hour later when we laid it down on her own bed, because we found she was gone."

Biddy cried; the darkening garden, and the lane, and the stars that were coming out, were 9 blurred in my own sight.

"Nothing was ever discovered, Biddy?"

"Nothing."

"Do you know what is become of Orlick?"

"I should think from the color of his clothes that he is working in the quarries."

"Of course you have seen him then? Why are you looking at that dark tree in the lane?"

"I saw him there on the night she died."

"That was not the last time either, Biddy?"

10 "No; I have seen him there since we have been walking here. It is of no use," said Biddy, laying her hand upon my arm, as I was for running out. "You know I would not deceive you; he was not there a minute, and he is gone."

It revived my utmost indignation to find that she was still pursued by this fellow, and I told her that I would spend any money or take any pains to drive him out of that country. By degrees she led me into more temperate talk, and she told me how Joe loved me, and how Joe never complained of anything—she didn't say, of me; she had no need; I knew what she meant—but ever did his duty in his way of life, and with a strong hand, a quiet tongue, and a gentle heart.

"Indeed, it would be hard to say too much for him," said I, "and of course I shall be often down here now. I am not going to leave poor Joe alone."

"Are you quite sure, then, that you *will* come to see him often?" asked Biddy, stopping in the narrow garden walk, and looking at me with a clear and honest eye.

"Oh, dear me!" said I as I found myself compelled to give up Biddy in despair. "This really 11 is a very bad side of human nature! Don't say any more, if you please, Biddy. This shocks me very much."

For which cogent reason I kept Biddy at a distance during supper, and when I went up to

6 Pip overestimates power of money; he thinks it can solve problems that it cannot.

7 **Characterization.** Biddy is stronger and more admirable than Pip, despite Pip's material advantages.

8 **What did Mrs. Joe mean by her last three words?** Responses will vary. She might have been asking Joe to pardon Pip for his betrayal of their friendship, or perhaps she is asking forgiveness for mistreating Joe and Pip when living.

9 Pip is moved by Biddy's story of his sister's death.

10 Orlick's hovering, ghostlike presence becomes more significant later when Pip has a nearly fatal encounter with Orlick.

11 Pip is still reluctant to face reality of his mistreatment of Joe.

## 12

Despite Pip's claim that he will return often, Joe and Biddy know better.

## Chapter 27

### 1

In England it is common for male to receive inheritance upon entering his "majority," or legal adulthood, which begins on his twenty-first birthday.

### 2

**Characterization.** Pip is proud and boastful; he wants everyone to know exactly when he is to have his "expectations" satisfied.

### 3

**Of what "old time" is Pip reminded? What are the implications of Pip's association of this situation with past?** He is reminded of his experience with convict in graveyard. Pip associates the dominating presence of Jaggers with that of convict. More astute readers may correctly predict true nature of relationship of Jaggers and convict.

my own little room, took as stately a leave of her as I could. As often as I was restless in the night, and that was every quarter of an hour, I reflected what an unkindness, what an injury, what an injustice, Biddy had done me.

Early in the morning I was to go. Early in the morning I was out, and looking in, unseen, at one of the wooden windows of the forge. There I stood, for minutes, looking at Joe, already at work with a glow of health and strength upon his face that made it show as if the bright sun of the life in store for him were shining on it.

"Goodbye, dear Joe! No, don't wipe it off—give me your blackened hand! I shall be down soon and often."

"Never too soon, sir," said Joe, "and never too often, Pip!"

Biddy was waiting for me at the kitchen door, with a mug of new milk and a crust of bread. "Biddy," said I, when I gave her my hand at parting, "I am not angry, but I am hurt."

"No, don't be hurt," she pleaded quite pathetically, "let only me be hurt, if I have been ungenerous."

**12** Once more, the mists were rising as I walked away. If they disclosed to me, as I suspect they did, that I should *not* come back, and that Biddy was quite right, all I can say is—they were quite right too.

## Chapter 27

*Miss Skiffins helps serve tea.*

Herbert and I went on from bad to worse, in the way of increasing our debts; and time went on; and I came of age. Herbert himself had come of age, eight months before me. As he

had nothing else than his majority<sup>1</sup> to come into, the event did not make a profound sensation in Barnard's Inn. But we had looked forward to my one-and-twentieth birthday with a crowd of speculations and anticipations, for we had both considered that my guardian could hardly help saying something definite on that occasion.

**2** I had taken care to have it well understood in Little Britain when my birthday was. On the day before it, I received an official note from Wemmick, informing me that Mr. Jaggers would be glad if I would call upon him at five in the afternoon of the auspicious day. This convinced us that something great was to happen, and threw me into an unusual flutter when I repaired to my guardian's office, a model of punctuality.

Wemmick offered me his congratulations, and incidentally rubbed the side of his nose with a folded piece of tissue paper that I liked the look of. It was November, and my guardian was standing before his fire with his hands under his coattails.

"Well, Pip," said he, "I must call you Mr. Pip today. Congratulations, Mr. Pip."

We shook hands and I thanked him.

"Take a chair, Mr. Pip," said my guardian.

**3** As I sat down, I felt at a disadvantage which reminded me of that old time when I had been put upon a tombstone.

"Now, my young friend," my guardian began, as if I were a witness in the box, "I am going to have a word or two with you."

"If you please, sir."

"What do you suppose," said Mr. Jaggers, "you are living at the rate of?"

"At the rate of, sir?"

"At," repeated Mr. Jaggers, "the—rate—of?"

Reluctantly, I confessed myself quite unable

1. **majority:** here, legal age.

to answer the question. This reply seemed agreeable to Mr. Jaggers, who said, "I thought so! Now, I have asked *you* a question, my friend. Have you anything to ask *me*?"

"Of course it would be a great relief to me to ask you several questions, sir."

"Ask one," said Mr. Jaggers.

"Is my benefactor to be made known to me today?"

"No. Ask another."

"Is that confidence to be imparted to me soon?"

"Waive that a moment," said Mr. Jaggers, "and ask another."

"Have—I—anything to receive, sir?" On that, Mr. Jaggers said, triumphantly, "I thought we should come to it!" and called to Wemmick to give him that piece of paper. Wemmick appeared, handed it in, and disappeared.

"Now, Mr. Pip," said Mr. Jaggers, "attend if you please. You have been drawing pretty freely here; your name occurs pretty often in Wemmick's cashbook; but you are in debt, of course?"

"I am afraid I must say yes, sir."

"You know you must say yes, don't you?" said Mr. Jaggers.

"Yes, sir."

"I don't ask you what you owe, because you don't know; and if you did know, you wouldn't tell me; you would say less. Yes, yes, my friend," cried Mr. Jaggers, waving his forefinger to stop me, as I made a show of protesting; "it's likely enough that you think you wouldn't, but you would. Now, take this piece of paper in your hand. Now, unfold it and tell me what it is."

"This is a bank note," said I, "for five hundred pounds."

"You consider it, undoubtedly, a handsome sum of money. Now, that handsome sum of money, Pip, is your own. It is a present to you

on this day, in earnest of your expectations. And at the rate of that handsome sum of money per annum,<sup>2</sup> and at no higher rate, you are to live until the donor of the whole appears. That is to say, you will now take your money affairs entirely into your own hands, and you will draw from Wemmick one hundred and twenty-five pounds per quarter until you are in communication with the fountain-head<sup>3</sup> and no longer with the mere agent. As I have told you before, I am the mere agent. I execute my instructions, and I am paid for doing so. I think them injudicious, but I am not paid for giving my opinion on their merits."

After a pause, I hinted:

"There was a question just now, Mr. Jaggers, which you desired me to waive for a moment. I hope I am doing nothing wrong in asking it again?"

"What is it?" said he.

"Is it likely," I said, after hesitating, "that my patron, Mr. Jaggers, will soon come to London," said I, "or summon me anywhere else?"

"Now here," replied Mr. Jaggers, fixing me for the first time with his dark deep-set eyes, "we must revert to the evening when we first encountered one another in your village. What did I tell you then, Pip?"

"You told me, Mr. Jaggers, that it might be years hence when that person appeared."

"Just so," said Mr. Jaggers. "That's my answer."

"Do you suppose it will still be some years hence, Mr. Jaggers?"

"Come!" said Mr. Jaggers. "I'll be plain with you, my friend Pip. That's a question I must not be asked. When that person discloses, you and that person will settle your own affairs. My

**4** *Why is Jaggers pleased when Pip says he doesn't know how much he spends?* Responses will vary. Jaggers seems to enjoy exposing weaknesses of others.

**5** Jaggers is making fun of Pip's concern with money.

**6** **Characterization.** Jaggers is disagreeably presumptuous and impolite, but he is right about Pip's indebtedness. His accuracy validates his prediction that Pip would lie about how much he owed if he knew.

**7** Jaggers gives impression that he draws sharp distinction between business and personal lives. Ironically, however, this statement and his mockery of Pip's indebtedness are in themselves intrusions of Jaggers' personal opinion into a business relationship.

2. **per annum** (ăn'əm): by the year (Latin).

3. **fountainhead**: source.



8

**Characterization.** Here again Jaggers shows his ability to manipulate others. He wants to dine with Pip and realizes that only way Pip can politely answer question about where he is to dine is to invite Jaggers.

9

Many people change their behavior to suit different situations, but not as consciously as Wemmick. He is expressing his "office opinion," knowing he will say something different later.

10

**Characterization.** Wemmick is "regular." Because Aged Parent relies on him, he must be dependable.

11

In reality, Aged knows nothing at all of what Wemmick is like at work; Aged's only view of Wemmick is in his "Walworth" mode. Aged can hear Stinger but cannot hear voices.

part in this business will cease. And that's all I have got to say."

"If that is all you have to say, sir," I remarked, "there can be nothing left for me to say."

8 He nodded assent and asked me where I was going to dine. I replied at my own chambers, with Herbert. As a necessary sequence, I asked him if he would favor us with his company, and he promptly accepted the invitation. But first he had a letter or two to write, and I said I would go into the outer office and talk to Wemmick.

The fact was that when the five hundred pounds had come into my pocket, a thought had come into my head which had been often there before; and it appeared to me that Wemmick was a good person to advise with.

"Mr. Wemmick," said I, "I want to ask your opinion. I am very desirous to serve a friend. This friend is trying to get on in commercial life, but has no money and finds it difficult and disheartening to make a beginning. Now, I want somehow to help him to a beginning."

"With money down?" said Wemmick, in a tone drier than any sawdust.

"With *some* money down," I replied, for an uneasy remembrance shot across me of that symmetrical bundle of papers at home; "with *some* money down, and perhaps some anticipation of my expectations."

"Mr. Pip," said Wemmick, "pitch your money into the Thames and you know the end of it. Serve a friend with it, and you may know the end of it too—but it's a less pleasant and profitable end."

"And that," said I, "is your deliberate opinion, Mr. Wemmick?"

"That," he returned, "is my deliberate opinion in this office."

"Ah!" said I, pressing him, for I thought I saw him near a loophole here; "but would that be your opinion at Walworth?"

9 "Mr. Pip," he replied with gravity, "Walworth is one place, and this office is another. Much as the Aged is one person, and Mr. Jaggers is another. They must not be confounded together. My Walworth sentiments must be taken at Walworth; none but my official sentiments can be taken in this office."

"Very well," said I, much relieved, "then I shall look you up at Walworth, you may depend upon it."

"Mr. Pip," he returned, "you will be welcome there, in a private and personal capacity."

We had held this conversation in a low voice, well knowing my guardian's ears to be the sharpest of the sharp. As he now appeared in his doorway, we all three went into the street together, and from the doorstep Wemmick turned his way, and Mr. Jaggers and I turned ours.

I devoted the next Sunday afternoon to a pilgrimage to the Castle. On arriving before the battlements, I found the Union Jack flying and the drawbridge up, but undeterred by this show of defiance and resistance, I rang at the gate, and was admitted by the Aged.

"My son, sir," said the old man, after securing the drawbridge, "left word that he would soon be home from his afternoon's walk. He is very regular in his walks, is my son. Very regular in everything, is my son."

I nodded at the old gentleman, and we went in and sat down by the fireside.

"You made acquaintance with my son, sir," said the old man, in his chirping way, while he warmed his hands at the blaze, "at his office, I expect?" I nodded. "Hah! I have heered that my son is a wonderful hand at his business."

I was startled by a sudden click in the wall on one side of the chimney, and the ghostly tumbling open of a little wooden flap with "JOHN" upon it. The old man, following my eyes, cried with great triumph, "My son's come home!" and we both went out to the drawbridge. The

Aged was so delighted to work the drawbridge that I made no offer to assist him, but stood quiet until Wemmick had come across, and had presented me to Miss Skiffins, a lady by whom he was accompanied.

Miss Skiffins was of a wooden appearance, like her escort. The cut of her dress from the waist upward, both before and behind, made her figure very like a boy's kite, and I might have pronounced her gown a little too decidedly orange and her gloves a little too intensely green; but she seemed to be a good sort of fellow, and showed a high regard for the Aged. I was not long in discovering that she was a frequent visitor at the Castle.

While Miss Skiffins was taking off her bonnet (she retained her green gloves during the evening as an outward and visible sign that there was company), Wemmick invited me to take a walk with him round the property and see how the island looked in wintertime. Thinking that he did this to give me an opportunity of taking his Walworth sentiments, I seized the opportunity as soon as we were out of the Castle.

I informed Wemmick that I was anxious in behalf of Herbert Pocket, and I told him how we had first met, and how we had fought. I alluded to the advantages I had derived in my first ignorance from his society, and I confessed that I feared I had but ill repaid them, and that he might have done better without me and my expectations. For all these reasons (I told Wemmick), and because he was my young companion and friend, I sought advice how I could best help Herbert to some present income—say of a hundred a year, to keep him in good hope and heart—and gradually to buy him onto some small partnership. I begged Wemmick to understand that my help must always be rendered without Herbert's knowledge or suspicion, and that there was no one else in the world with whom I could advise. I

wound up by laying my hand upon his shoulder and saying, "I can't help confiding in you, though I know it must be troublesome to you; but that is your fault in having ever brought me here."

Wemmick was silent for a little while, and then said, "Mr. Pip, I'll put on my considering cap, and I think all you want to do may be done by degrees. Skiffins (that's her brother) is an accountant and agent. I'll look him up and go to work for you."

After a little further conversation to the same effect, we returned into the Castle, where we found Miss Skiffins preparing tea. The responsible duty of making the toast was delegated to the Aged, and that excellent old gentleman prepared such a haystack of buttered toast that I could scarcely see him over it. We ate the whole of the toast and drank tea in proportion, and it was delightful to see how warm and greasy we all got after it. The Aged especially might have passed for some clean old chief of a savage tribe, just oiled. Then we drew round the fire, and Wemmick said, "Now, Aged Parent, read us the paper."

Wemmick explained to me while the Aged got his spectacles out that this was according to custom, and that it gave the old gentleman infinite satisfaction to read the news aloud. "I won't offer an apology," said Wemmick, "for he isn't capable of many pleasures—are you, Aged P.?"

"All right, John, all right," returned the old man, seeing himself spoken to.

"Only tip him a nod every now and then when he looks off his paper," said Wemmick, "and he'll be as happy as a king. We are all attention, Aged One."

As Wemmick and Miss Skiffins sat side by side, I observed him slowly and gradually stealing his arm round Miss Skiffins' waist. In course of time I saw his hand appear on the other side of Miss Skiffins; but at that moment

12

Anywhere else Pip would probably have felt superior to Miss Skiffins; influenced by atmosphere of tolerance at Walworth, however, Pip accepts her.

13

**Characterization.** Essential event in evolution of Pip's character. Until now, Pip's benevolent intentions have led to little action. Given purely out of love and friendship, Pip's secret gift to Herbert gives reader impression that Pip is becoming more kind, loving, and human.

14

**Characterization.** Snobbish "London Pip" would have looked down on the untidiness of Aged, "just oiled." That it is "delightful" to Pip shows that Pip's false values might change.

15

Aged Parent has few pleasures. Wemmick enjoys indulging him.

16

**Characterization.** Miss Skiffins' composure is "one of the most remarkable sights" because Wemmick's hand is removed with finesse unexpected in such a woman.

Miss Skiffins neatly stopped him with the green glove, unwound his arm again as if it were an article of dress, and with the greatest deliberation laid it on the table before her.

16 Miss Skiffins' composure while she did this was one of the most remarkable sights I have ever seen.

At last the Aged read himself into a light slumber. Of course I knew better than to offer to see Miss Skiffins home, and under the circumstances I thought I had best go first; which I did, taking a cordial leave of the Aged, and having passed a pleasant evening.

Before a week was out, I received a note from Wemmick, dated Walworth, stating that he hoped he had made some advance in that matter appertaining to our private and personal capacities. The upshot was that we found a worthy young merchant, not long established in business, who wanted intelligent help, and who wanted capital, and who in due course of time would want a partner. Between him and me secret articles were signed of which Herbert was the subject, and I paid him half of my five hundred pounds down, and engaged for other payments; some to fall due at certain dates out of my income; some contingent on my coming into my property. Miss Skiffins' brother conducted the negotiation.

The whole business was so cleverly managed that Herbert had not the least suspicion of my hand being in it. I never shall forget the radiant face with which he came home one afternoon, and told me, as a mighty piece of news, of his having fallen in with one Clarriker (the young merchant's name), and of his belief that the opening had come at last. Day by day as his hopes grew stronger and his face brighter, he must have thought me a more and more affectionate friend, for I had the greatest difficulty in restraining my tears of triumph when I saw him so happy.

17 At length, the thing being done, and he hav-

ing that day entered Clarriker's House, and he having talked to me for a whole evening in a flush of pleasure and success, I did really cry in good earnest when I went to bed, to think that my expectations had done some good to somebody.

A great event in my life, the turning point of my life, now opens on my view. But, before I proceed to narrate it, and before I pass on to all the changes it involved, I must give one chapter to Estella. It is not much to give to the theme that so long filled my heart.

## Chapter 28

*Estella warns Pip.*

The lady with whom Estella was placed, Mrs. Brandley by name, was a widow, with one daughter several years older than Estella. They were in what is called a good position, and they visited, and were visited by, numbers of people.

In Mrs. Brandley's house and out of Mrs. Brandley's house, I suffered every kind and degree of torture that Estella could cause me. She made use of me to tease other admirers; and she turned the very familiarity between herself and me to the account of putting a constant slight on my devotion to her. And while I think it likely that it almost maddened her other lovers, I knew too certainly that it almost maddened me. She had admirers without end.

1 No doubt my jealousy made an admirer of everyone who went near her; but there were more than enough of them without that.

I saw her often at Richmond, I heard of her often in town, and I used often to take her and the Brandleys on all sorts of pleasures—and they were all miseries to me. I never had one

17

Pip is crying for joy over Herbert's happiness and his ability to help her.

## Chapter 28

1

**How might this statement be interpreted?** Pip's jealousy leads him to believe that everyone who speaks to Estella wants to court her.



hour's happiness in her society, and yet my mind all round the four-and-twenty hours was harping on the happiness of having her with me unto death. She habitually reverted to that tone which expressed that our association was forced upon us. There were other times when she would come to a sudden check in this tone and in all her many tones and would seem to pity me.

"Pip, Pip," she said one evening, when we sat apart at a darkening window of the house in Richmond; "will you never take warning?"

"Of what?"

"Of me."

"Warning not to be attracted by you, do you mean, Estella?"

"Do I mean! If you don't know what I mean, you are blind."

3 "At any rate," said I, "I have no warning given me just now, for you wrote to me to come to you this time."

"That's true," said Estella, with a cold careless smile that always chilled me. "The time has come round when Miss Havisham wishes to have me for a day at Satis. You are to take me there, and bring me back, if you will. She would rather I did not travel alone, and objects to receiving my maid, for she has a sensitive horror of being talked of by such people. Can you take me?"

"Can I take you, Estella!"

"You can then? The day after tomorrow, if you please. You are to pay all charges out of my purse. You hear the condition of your going?"

"And must obey," said I.

We went down on the next day but one, and we found Miss Havisham in the room where I had first beheld her. She hung upon Estella's beauty, hung upon her words, hung upon her gestures, and looked at her, as though she were devouring the beautiful creature she had reared.

From Estella she looked at me, with a searching glance that seemed to pry into my heart and probe its wounds. "How does she use you, Pip, how does she use you?" she asked me again, with her witchlike eagerness, even in Estella's hearing. But when we sat by the flickering fire at night, she was most weird, for then, keeping Estella's hand drawn through her arm and clutched in her own hand, she extorted from her by dint of referring back to what Estella had told her in her regular letters the names and conditions of the men she had fascinated, I saw in this that Estella was set to

4 wreak Miss Havisham's revenge on men. I, too, was tormented even while the prize was reserved for me. I saw in this the reason for my being staved off so long, and the reason for my late guardian's declining to commit himself to the formal knowledge of such a scheme.

5 The candles that lighted that room were placed in sconces on the wall.

They were high from the ground, and they burned with the steady dullness of artificial light in air that is seldom renewed. As I looked round at them, and at the pale gloom they made, and at the stopped clock, and at the withered articles of bridal dress upon the table and the ground, and at her own awful figure with its ghostly reflection thrown large by the fire upon the ceiling and the wall, I saw in everything the construction that my mind had come to, repeated and thrown back to me.

It happened on the occasion of this visit that some sharp words arose between Estella and Miss Havisham. It was the first time I had ever seen them opposed.

Miss Havisham still clutched Estella's hand in hers, when Estella gradually began to detach herself. She had shown a proud impatience more than once before, and had rather endured that fierce affection than accepted or returned it.

"What!" said Miss Havisham, flashing her

2 **Characterization.** Rare glimpse of emotion in Estella; broadens her previously two-dimensional character.

3 **Characterization.** Testifies to blindness of Pip's love for Estella. He chooses to ignore her warning and invests her invitation with significance it does not have, all to preserve illusion of winning her.

4 Pip works everything into framework of his illusion. His torment is result of Estella's role as Miss Havisham's avenger. Actually, Pip is in torment simply because Estella does not love him.

5 **Imagery.** Complex series of images communicates Pip's state of mind to reader. Pip's statement that images mirror his mind has a poetic impact.

6

**Characterization.** Miss Havisham's angry agitation is caused by her love for Estella. Even though she is object of intense emotion, Estella remains true to her upbringing. She is composed, indifferent.

7

Miss Havisham has apparently never considered the effect that Estella's training might have on their relationship.

8

Tendency among all three to ignore truth (that Miss Havisham is insane and that Estella loves no one) is strong enough to restore illusion of peace relatively quickly.

9

*Is Miss Havisham moaning and pacing all night because of what Estella said, or does she do this every night, remembering her disappointment in love?* Responses will vary. Miss Havisham is a lonely, unhappy woman; falling out with Estella has obviously hurt her. She may have begun to understand what kind of pain and unhappiness she has inflicted on herself and on others through Estella.

eyes upon her. "Are you tired of me?"

"Only a little tired of myself," replied Estella, disengaging her arm.

"Speak the truth, you ingrate!" cried Miss Havisham, passionately striking her stick upon the floor. "You are tired of me."

6 Estella looked at her with perfect composure, and again looked down at the fire. Her graceful figure and her beautiful face expressed a self-possessed indifference to the wild heat of the other that was almost cruel.

"You stock and stone!" exclaimed Miss Havisham. "You cold, cold heart!"

"What!" said Estella. "Do you reproach me for being cold? You?"

"Are you not?" was the fierce retort.

"You should know," said Estella. "I am what you have made me."

"So proud, so proud!" moaned Miss Havisham, pushing away her gray hair with both her hands.

"Who taught me to be proud?" returned Estella. "Who praised me when I learned my lesson?"

"So hard, so hard!" moaned Miss Havisham, with her former action.

"Who taught me to be hard?" returned Estella. "Who praised me when I learned my lesson?"

7 "But to be proud and hard to *me*!" Miss Havisham quite shrieked, as she stretched out her arms. "Estella, Estella, Estella, to be proud and hard to *me*!"

"So," said Estella, "I must be taken as I have been made. The success is not mine, the failure is not mine, but the two together make me."

Miss Havisham had settled down, upon the floor, among the faded bridal relics with which it was strewn. I took advantage of the moment—I had sought one from the first—to leave the room, after beseeching Estella's attention to her with a movement of my hand. When I left, Estella was yet standing by the

great chimney piece, just as she had stood throughout. Miss Havisham's gray hair was all adrift upon the ground, among the other bridal wrecks, and was a miserable sight to see.

It was with a depressed heart that I walked in the starlight for an hour and more, about the courtyard, and about the brewery, and about the ruined garden. When I at last took courage to return to the room, I found Estella 8 sitting at Miss Havisham's knee. Afterward Estella and I played cards, as of yore—only we were skillful now, and played French games—and so the evening wore away, and I went to bed.

I lay in that separate building across the courtyard. It was the first time I had ever lain down to rest in Satis House, and sleep refused to come near me. At last I felt that I absolutely must get up. I put on my clothes and went out across the yard into the long stone passage. But I was no sooner in the passage than I extinguished my candle, for I saw Miss Havisham going along it in a ghostly manner, making a low cry. I followed her at a distance and saw her go up the staircase. She carried a bare candle in her hand and was a most unearthly object by its light. Standing at the bottom of the staircase, I heard her walking across into her own room, never ceasing the low cry. After a time, I tried in the dark both to get out and to go back, but I could do neither until some streaks of day strayed in and showed me where 9 to lay my hands. During the whole interval, I heard her footstep, saw her candle pass above, and heard her ceaseless low cry.

Before we left next day, there was no revival of the difference between her and Estella, nor was it ever revived on any similar occasions; and there were four similar occasions, to the best of my remembrance.

It is impossible to turn this leaf of my life without putting Bentley Drummle's name upon it, or I would, very gladly.

On a certain occasion when the Finches<sup>1</sup> were assembled, the presiding Finch called the Grove to order, forasmuch as Mr. Drummle had not yet toasted a lady, it was the brute's turn to do so that day. What was my indignant surprise when he called upon the company to pledge him to "Estella!"

I tell this lightly, but it was no light thing to me. For I cannot express what pain it gave me to think that Estella should show any favor to a contemptible, clumsy, sulky booby, so very far below the average.

It was easy for me to find out, and I did soon find out, that Drummle had begun to follow her closely, and that she allowed him to do it. A little while, and he was always in pursuit of her, and Estella held him on; now with encouragement, now with discouragement, now almost flattering him, now openly despising him. The Spider, as Mr. Jaggers had called him, was used to lying in wait, however, and had the patience of his tribe.

At a certain Assembly Ball at Richmond, I resolved to speak to her concerning him. I took the opportunity when she was waiting for Mrs. Brandley to take her home.

"Are you tired, Estella?"

"Rather, Pip."

"You should be."

"Say, rather, I should not be; for I have my letter to Satis House to write before I go to sleep."

"Recounting tonight's triumph?" said I. "Surely a very poor one, Estella."

"What do you mean?"

"Estella," said I, "do look at that fellow in the corner yonder who is looking over here at us."

"Why should I look at him?" returned Estella. "What is there in that fellow in the corner that I need look at?"

1. **Finches:** a social club to which Pip, Herbert, and Drummle belonged.

"Indeed, that is the very question I want to ask you," said I. "For he has been hovering about you all night."

"Moths and all sorts of ugly creatures," replied Estella with a glance toward him, "hover about a lighted candle. Can the candle help it?"

"But, Estella, do hear me speak. It makes me wretched that you should encourage a man so generally despised as Drummle. You know he is despised."

"Well?" said she.

"You know he is an ill-tempered, lowering, stupid fellow."

"Well?" said she.

"You know he has nothing to recommend him but money, don't you?"

"Pip," said Estella, casting her glance over the room, "don't be foolish about its effect on you. It may have its effect on others, and may be meant to have. It's not worth discussing."

"Yes, it is," said I, "because I cannot bear that people should say, 'she throws away her graces and attractions on a mere boor, the lowest in the crowd.'"

"I can bear it," said Estella.

"Oh! don't be so proud, Estella, and so inflexible."

"Calls me proud and inflexible in this breath!" said Estella, opening her hands. "And in his last breath reproached me for stooping to a boor!"

"There is no doubt you do," said I, "for I have seen you give him looks and smiles this very night, such as you never gave to—me."

"Do you want me then," said Estella, turning suddenly with a fixed and serious look, "to deceive and entrap you?"

"Do you deceive and entrap him, Estella?"

"Yes, and many others—all of them but you. Here is Mrs. Brandley. I'll say no more."

And now that I have given the one chapter to the theme that so filled my heart, and so often made it ache and ache again, I pass on

## 10

**Why is Pip so disturbed about Estella's "show of favor" to Drummle?** Responses will vary. Pip wants her love, and this new preference lessens his chances of winning it. Pip has "idealized" her, making her smarter and nobler than she really is. Also, her association with "Spider" adds insult to injury.

## 11

**Plot.** This ends any chance Pip has of marrying Estella. When she was kept in isolation at Satis, Pip had hopes—these have rapidly dwindled in wake of Estella's debut.

## 12

Although one might criticize her for materialism, Estella does not have romantic illusions about others who marry for money and position as she will.

## 13

Realistic and intelligent, if cynical, Estella is forthright with Pip and confronts his inconsistencies.

## 14

**Irony.** Estella treats Pip differently than she treats others, not by loving Pip more (as he wants) but by lying to him less. Irony is twofold: Pip is only one she does not deceive, but she does not need to deceive him. Pip deceives and entraps himself.



### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Exploring the Subject**

Estella's and Pip's postures in this photograph from the movie reflect their relationship. Pip leans toward Estella, symbolizing his love for her, while Estella leans rigidly forward, symbolizing her cold aloofness and distance.

#### **Ideas for Writing**

Ask students to write essays in which they analyze whose fault it is—Pip's or Estella's—that their friendship turns out so poorly in the course of Stage 2. If students think neither at fault, they may develop arguments blaming some other person or even society. The best essays will link Pip's and Estella's problems to one or more of the themes of *Great Expectations*.



unhindered to the event that had impended over me longer yet; the event that had begun to be prepared for before I knew that the world held Estella.

All the work, near and afar, that tended to the end, had been accomplished; and in an instant the blow was struck, and the roof of my stronghold dropped upon me.

## Chapter 29

*Pip has a midnight caller.*

1 I was three-and-twenty years of age. Not another word had I heard to enlighten me on the subject of my expectations. We had left Barnard's Inn a year before, and lived in the Temple.<sup>1</sup> Our chambers were in Garden Court, down by the river. Mr. Pocket and I had for some time parted company as to our original relations, though we continued on the best terms.

Business had taken Herbert on a journey to Marseilles. I was alone, and had a dull sense of being alone. I sadly missed the cheerful face and ready response of my friend. It was wretched weather; stormy and wet, stormy and wet; mud, mud, mud, deep in all the streets. We lived at the top of the last house, and the wind rushing up the river shook the house that night, like discharges of cannon or breakings of a sea. I saw that the lamps in the court were blown out, and that the lamps on the bridges and the shore were shuddering, and that the coal fires in barges on the river were being carried away before the wind like red-hot splashes in the rain.

I read with my watch upon the table, pur-

1. **Temple:** group of buildings near the Thames River, which were occupied by lawyers, court officials, and clerks.

posing to close my book at eleven o'clock. As I shut it, all the church clocks in the city struck that hour. The sound was curiously flawed by the wind; and I was listening, when I heard a footstep on the stair.

What nervous folly made me start, and awfully connect it with the footstep of my dead sister, matters not. It was past in a moment, and I listened again, and heard the footstep stumble in coming on. Remembering then that the staircase lights were blown out, I took up my reading lamp and went out to the stair-head. Whoever was below had stopped on seeing my lamp, for all was quiet.

"There is someone down there, is there not?" I called out, looking down.

"Yes," said a voice from the darkness beneath.

"What floor do you want?"

"The top, Mr. Pip."

"That is my name. There is nothing the matter?"

"Nothing the matter," returned the voice. And the man came on.

I stood with my lamp held out over the stair rail, and he came slowly within its light. I saw a face that was strange to me, looking up with an incomprehensible air of being touched and pleased by the sight of me.

Moving the lamp as the man moved, I made out that he was substantially dressed, but roughly, like a voyager by sea. That he had long iron-gray hair. That his age was about sixty. That he was a muscular man, strong on his legs, and that he was browned and hardened by exposure to weather. As he ascended the last stair or two, I saw, with a stupid kind of amazement, that he was holding out both his hands to me.

"Pray what is your business?" I asked him.

"My business?" he repeated, pausing. "Ah! Yes, I will explain my business, by your leave."

15

**Foreshadowing.** Impending event has its origins in Pip's childhood; this clue and others indicate that the event is related to the convict Pip helped.

## Chapter 29

1

Pip's age is indication that two years have passed.

2

**What atmosphere is created in this passage?** Descriptive details create dark, violent, evil atmosphere.

3

**Suspense.** Association of Pip's dead sister with sound of footsteps creates tension.

4 **Why does the visitor call Pip "master"?** Despite his age and his status as guest, visitor is part of lower class. He considers Pip a gentleman.

5 **Foreshadowing.** Visitor's "air of wondering pleasure" foreshadows revelation that he is Pip's secret benefactor.

6 **Dialect.** Visitor's use of common dialect, like his rough clothes, identifies him as belonging to lower class.

7 The convict's appearance resolves some conflicts and initiates others. Pip's wait to meet benefactor and to learn of his expectations is over, resolving one element of Pip's **internal conflict**. However, convict's common criminal background shatters Pip's hopes about his benefactor, causing further internal conflict for Pip.

"Do you wish to come in?"

4 "Yes," he replied. "I wish to come in, master."

I took him into the room I had just left and, having set the lamp on the table, asked him as civilly as I could to explain himself.

5 He looked about him with the strangest air—an air of wondering pleasure, as if he had some part in the things he admired—and he pulled off a rough outer coat, and his hat. Then I saw that his head was furrowed and bald, and that the long iron-gray hair grew only on its sides. But I saw nothing that in the least explained him. On the contrary, I saw him next moment once more holding out both his hands to me.

"What do you mean?" said I, half-suspecting him to be mad.

6 He stopped in his looking at me and slowly rubbed his right hand over his head. "It's disappointing to a man," he said, in a coarse broken voice, "arter having looked for'ard so distant, and come so fur; but you're not to blame for that—neither on us is to blame for that. I'll speak in half a minute. Give me half a minute, please."

He sat down on a chair that stood before the fire, and covered his forehead with his large brown hands. I looked at him attentively then, and recoiled a little from him; but I did not know him.

"There's no one nigh," said he, looking over his shoulder, "is there?"

"Why do you, a stranger coming into my rooms at this time of the night, ask that question?" said I.

"You're a game one," he returned. "I'm glad you've grow'd up a game one! But don't catch hold of me. You'd be sorry afterwards to have done it."

I relinquished the intention he had detected, for I knew him! Even yet I could not recall a single feature, but I knew him! If the wind and the rain had driven away the intervening years,

7 had swept us to the churchyard where we first stood face to face on such different levels, I could not have known my convict more distinctly than I knew him now, as he sat in the chair before the fire. No need to take a file from his pocket and show it to me; no need to take the handkerchief from his neck and twist it round his head; no need to hug himself with both his arms, and take a shivering turn across the room, looking back at me for recognition. I knew him before he gave me one of those aids, though a moment before I had not been conscious of remotely suspecting his identity.

He came back to where I stood and again held out both his hands. Not knowing what to do—for in my astonishment I had lost my self-possession—I reluctantly gave him my hands. He grasped them heartily, raised them to his lips, kissed them, and still held them.

"You acted nobly, my boy," said he. "Noble Pip! And I have never forgot it!"

At a change in his manners as if he were even going to embrace me, I laid a hand upon his breast and put him away.

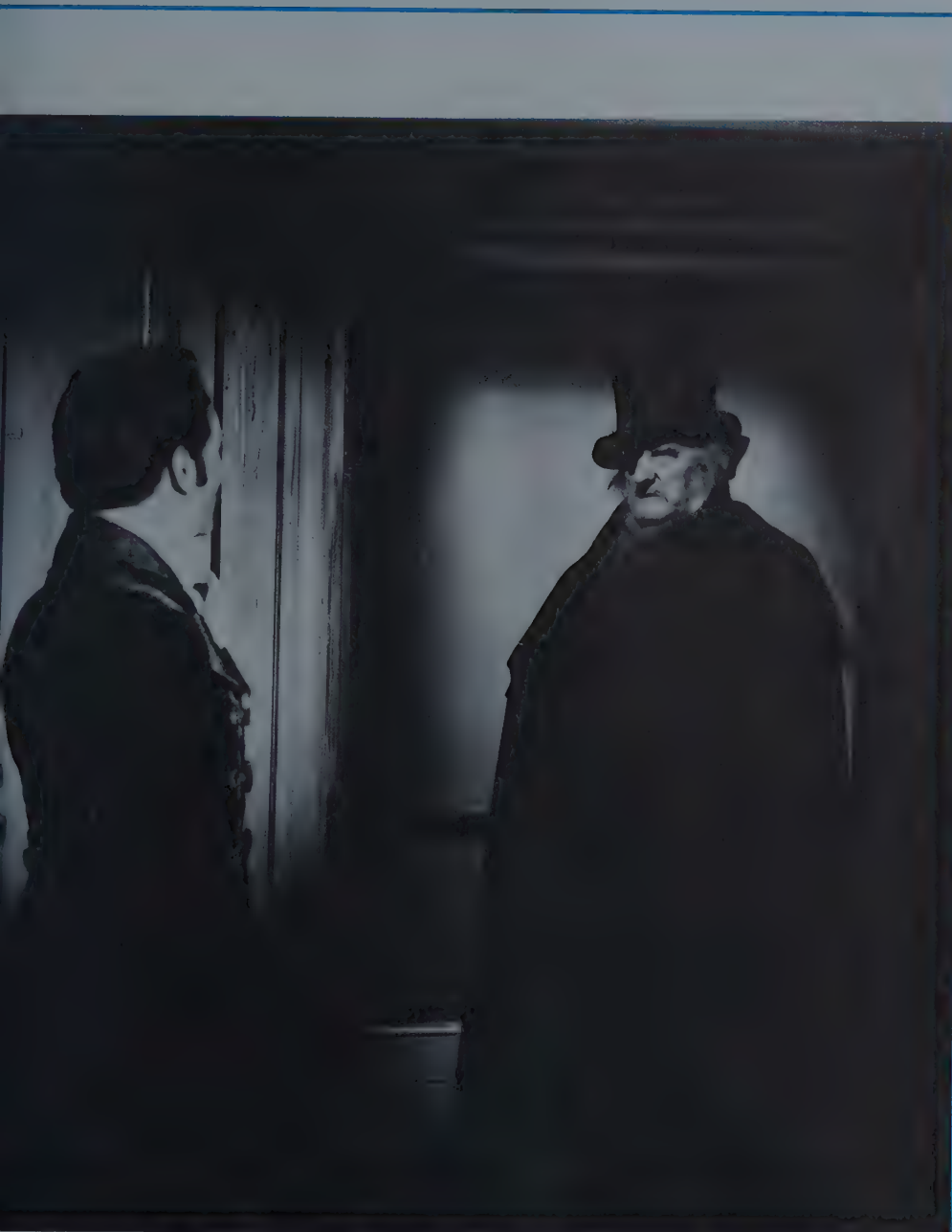
"Stay!" said I. "Keep off! If you are grateful to me for what I did when I was a little child, I hope you have shown your gratitude by mending your way of life. If you have come here to thank me, it was not necessary. There must be something good in the feeling that has brought you here, and I will not repulse you; but surely you must understand—I—"

My attention was so attracted by the **singularity** of his fixed look at me that the words died away on my tongue.

"You was a-saying," he observed, when we had confronted one another in silence, "that surely I must understand. What surely must I understand?"

"That I cannot wish to renew that chance intercourse with you of long ago, under these different circumstances. I am glad to believe you have repented and recovered yourself. I





### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Exploring the Subject**

Magwitch's position, facing Pip while framed in the door to Pip's room, suggests a mirror image. Magwitch, Pip's surrogate father in many ways, stands in the mirror of the door frame, offering himself to his son as his son's own reflection. In the loneliness of a dark, wet, and cold night, Pip sees in this mirror his childhood history, his lonely present, and his "expectations" for the future—everything he is.

#### **Ideas for Writing**

Throughout the novel, the reader is informed of Pip's thoughts and motivations, but discovers little about Magwitch. Have students pretend they are Magwitch. Ask them to narrate what the convict might be thinking as he climbs the stairs to Pip's apartment, knocks on the door, and sees Pip for the first time as an adult. They might continue the narrative up to the point when Magwitch reveals that he is Pip's benefactor. The narrative of Magwitch's inner thoughts should capture his motivations for giving Pip the money. Students should try to explore Magwitch's "expectations."

8

Pip's apparent rudeness is probably raw fear.

9

**Characterization.** Magwitch isn't merely rough criminal. His tears show depth of his love for Pip.

10

**Is Magwitch's rags-to-riches story believable?** Magwitch's success is unusual for his time. Very few poor people had the opportunity to improve their financial status, but many convicts did do well in Australia; some even became wealthy.

11

**Irony.** Pip has "done well" not "like" the visitor but because of him. Pip's attempt to pay him back the two one-pound notes is ironic.

12

**Suspense.** Questions create and build tension as they lead Pip to realize that Magwitch is his benefactor.

am glad to tell you so. I am glad that, thinking I deserve to be thanked, you have come to thank me. But our ways are different ways, none the less. You are wet, and you look weary.

8 Will you drink something before you go?"

He had replaced his neckerchief loosely, and had stood, keenly observant of me, biting a long end of it. "I think," he answered, still observant of me, "that I *will* drink (I thank you) afore I go."

I made him some hot rum-and-water. I tried to keep my hand steady while I did so. When at last I put the glass to him, I saw with amazement that his eyes were full of tears. I was softened by the softened aspect of the man, and felt a touch of reproach. "I hope," said I, "that you will not think I spoke harshly to you just now. I had no intention of doing it, and I am sorry for it if I did. I wish you well and happy!"

As I put my glass to my lips, he stretched out his hand. I gave him mine, and then he drank, and drew his sleeve across his eyes and forehead.

"How are you living?" I asked him.

"I've been a sheep farmer, stockbreeder, and other trades besides, away in the new world," said he; "many a thousand mile of stormy water off from this."

"I hope you have done well?"

10 "I've done wonderful well. No man has done nigh as well as me. I'm famous for it."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"I hope to hear you say so, my dear boy."

Without stopping to try to understand those words or the tone in which they were spoken, I turned off to a point that had just come into my mind.

"Have you ever seen a messenger you once sent to me," I inquired, "since he undertook that trust?"

"Never set eyes upon him. I warn't likely to."

"He came faithfully, and he brought me the two one-pound notes. I was a poor boy, then,

as you know, and to a poor boy they were a little fortune. But, like you, I have done well since, and you must let me pay them back. You can put them to some other poor boy's use." I took out my purse.

He watched me as I laid my purse upon the table and opened it, and he watched me as I separated two one-pound notes from its contents. They were clean and new, and I spread them out and handed them over to him. Still watching me, he laid them one upon the other, folded them longwise, gave them a twist, set fire to them at the lamp, and dropped the ashes into the tray.

"May I make so bold," he said then, with a smile that was like a frown, and with a frown that was like a smile, "as to ask you *how* you have done well, since you and me was out on them lone shivering marshes?"

He emptied his glass, got up, and stood at the side of the fire, with his heavy brown hand on the mantelshelf. He put a foot up to the bars to dry and warm it, and the wet boot began to steam; but he neither looked at it nor at the fire, but steadily looked at me. It was only now that I began to tremble.

When my lips had parted, I forced myself to tell him that I had been chosen to succeed to some property.

12 "Might a mere warmint ask what property?" said he.

I faltered, "I don't know."

"Might a mere warmint ask whose property?" said he.

I faltered again, "I don't know."

"Could I make a guess, I wonder," said the convict, "at your income since you come of age? As to the first figure, now. Five?"

With my heart beating like a heavy hammer of disordered action, I rose out of my chair, and stood with my hand upon the back of it, looking wildly at him.

"Concerning a guardian," he went on.

"There ought to have been some guardian or such-like, whiles you was a minor. Some lawyer, maybe. As to the first letter of that lawyer's name, now. Would it be J?"

**13** All the truth of my position came flashing on me; and its disappointments, dangers, disgraces, consequences of all kinds, rushed in in such a multitude that I was borne down by them and had to struggle for every breath I drew. "Put it," he resumed, "as the employer of that lawyer whose name begun with a J, and might be Jaggers—put it as he had come over sea to Portsmouth, and had landed there, and had wanted to come on to you. Well! however did I find you out? Why, I wrote from Portsmouth to a person in London for particulars of your address. That person's name? Why, Wemmick."

I could not have spoken one word, though it **14** had been to save my life. I stood, with a hand on the chair back and a hand on my breast, where I seemed to be suffocating—I stood so, looking wildly at him, until I grasped at the chair, when the room began to surge and turn. He caught me, drew me to the sofa, put me up against the cushions, and bent on one knee before me: bringing the face that I now well remembered, and that I shuddered at, very near to mine.

**15** "Yes, Pip, dear boy, I've made a gentleman on you! It's me wot has done it! I swore that time, sure as ever I earned a guinea, that guinea should go to you. I swore arterwards, such as ever I spec'lated and got rich, you should get rich. I lived rough, that you should live smooth; I worked hard that you should be above work. What odds, dear boy? Do I tell it fur you to feel a obligation? Not a bit. I tell it fur you to know as that there hunted dog wot you kept life in got his head so high that he could make a gentleman—and, Pip, you're him!"

The abhorrence in which I held the man, the

dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some terrible beast.

"Look'ee here, Pip. I'm your second father. You're my son—more to me nor any son. I've put away money, only for you to spend. When I was a hired-out shepherd in a solitary hut, not seeing no faces but faces of sheep till I half forgot wot men's and women's faces was like, I see yourn. I drops my knife many a time in that hut when I was a-eating my dinner or my supper, and I says, 'Here's the boy again, a-looking at me whiles I eats and drinks!' I see you there a many times as plain as ever I see you on them misty marshes. I says each time, 'If I gets liberty and money, I'll make that boy a gentleman!' And I done it. Why, look at you, dear boy! Look at these here lodgings of yourn, fit for a lord! A lord? Ah! You shall show money with lords for wagers, and beat 'em!"

**16** In his heat and triumph, and in his knowledge that I had been nearly fainting, he did not remark on my reception of all this. It was the one grain of relief I had. Again he took both my hands and put them to his lips, while my blood ran cold within me.

"Don't you mind talking, Pip," said he. "You ain't looked slowly forward to this as I have; you wosn't prepared for this, as I wos. But didn't you never think it might be me?"

"Oh no, no, no," I returned. "Never, never!"

"Well, you see it *was* me, and single-handed. Never a soul in it but my own self and Mr. Jaggers."

"Was there no one else?" I asked.

"No," said he, with a glance of surprise. "Who else should there be? And, dear boy,

**17** how good-looking you have growed! There's bright eyes somewheres—eh? Isn't there bright eyes somewheres, wot you love the thoughts on?"

**13**

**Turning point.** All Pip's social and financial "expectations" crumble. Magwitch's stained past poisons wealth for Pip, robbing it of its symbolic social power.

**14**

**Symbol.** More than fit of dizziness, fall signifies general collapse: physical and mental health, financial security, personal values—a destruction necessary before a new maturity can be built.

**15**

**Has Magwitch truly "made a gentleman" of Pip?** Responses will vary. Probably not. Magwitch has given him money, but as Pip finally learns from Magwitch's appearance, money is insufficient in itself. Nevertheless, Pip looks like a gentleman.

**16**

For all these years, Magwitch has been dreaming of Pip. Now Magwitch must learn that Pip is not the "dream-Pip" Magwitch was expecting.

**17**

**Irony.** Unaware of Pip's desolation, Magwitch repeatedly says things that make Pip feel worse instead of better.



18

Irony. Money can buy Estella; Pip, however, will never possess anything more than a "dream-Estella."

19

What does Pip mean by "stained with blood"? What does this reveal about Pip's attitude toward Magwitch? Pip means "guilty of murder or violent attack." Shows that Pip still fears Magwitch and thinks of him as a violent criminal.

20

Pip's transformation is seen in his changed attitude toward money; once wanting money badly, Pip now blames Magwitch for "loading me with his wretched gold and silver chains for years."

21

Metaphor. Pip compares his illusions to a ship. When they are destroyed, Pip must deal with the "wreck" of his own life.

22

With new clarity, Pip is able to compile list of his errors and misjudgments.

O Estella, Estella!

18 "They shall be yourn, dear boy, if money can buy 'em. Let me finish wot I was a-telling you, dear boy. From that there hut and that there hiring-out, I got money left me by my master (which died, and had been the same as me), and got my liberty and went for myself. It all prospered wonderful. As I giv' you to understand just now, I'm famous for it. It was the money left me and gains of the first few years wot I sent home to Mr. Jaggers—all for you—when he first come arter you, agreeable to my letter."

Oh, that he had never come! That he had left me at the forge—far from contented, yet, by comparison, happy!

"And, then, dear boy, I held steady afore my mind that I would for certain come one day and see my boy, and make myself known to him, on his own ground."

He laid his hand on my shoulder. I shuddered at the thought that for anything I knew 19 his hand might be stained with blood.

"Where will you put me?" he asked presently. "I must be put somewheres, dear boy." "To sleep?" said I.

"Yes. And to sleep long and sound," he answered, "for I've been sea-tossed and sea-washed, months and months."

"My friend and companion," said I, rising 22 from the sofa, "is absent; you must have his room."

"He won't come back tomorrow, will he?"

"No," said I, answering almost mechanically, "not tomorrow."

"Because, look'ee here, dear boy," he said, dropping his voice, and laying a long finger on my breast in an impressive manner, "caution is necessary."

"How do you mean? Caution?"

"It's death!"

"What's death?"

"I was sent for life. It's death to come back.

There's been overmuch coming back of late years, and I should of a certainty be hanged if took."

Nothing was needed but this; the wretched 20 man, after loading me with his wretched gold and silver chains for years, had risked his life to come to me, and I held it there in my keeping!

My first care was to close the shutters so that no light might be seen from without, and then to close and make fast the doors. He asked me for some of my "gentleman's linen" to put on in the morning. I brought it out, and laid it ready for him, and my blood again ran cold when he again took me by both hands to give me good night.

I got away from him, without knowing how I did it, and for an hour or more I remained too 21 stunned to think. It was not until I began to think that I began fully to know how wrecked I was, and how the ship in which I had sailed was gone to pieces.

Miss Havisham's intentions toward me, all a mere dream; Estella not designed for me; I only suffered in Satis House as a convenience, a sting for the greedy relations, a model with a mechanical heart to practice on when no other practice was at hand. But sharpest and deepest pain of all—it was for the convict, guilty of I 22 knew not what crimes, that I had deserted Joe.

In every rage of wind and rush of rain, I heard pursuers. Twice I could have sworn there was a knocking and whispering at the outer door. With these fears upon me, I began to either imagine or recall that I had had mysterious warnings of this man's approach. Crowding up with these reflections came the reflection that I had seen him with my childish eyes to be a desperately violent man; that I had heard that other convict reiterate that he had tried to murder him; that I had seen him down in the ditch, tearing and fighting like a wild beast. Out of such remembrances, I brought

## CLOSURE

Ask students to describe how characters change in Stage 2. Is Pip the same person he was? How much can a person change before he or she becomes a "new" person?

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Discuss Pip's predicament. Why is Pip so disgusted by Magwitch? How do students think Magwitch's arrival will change Pip? Will it be right or wrong for Pip to take Magwitch's money?

Magwitch and Miss Havisham, as surrogate parents, have similar roles in this novel. Ask students to analyze the roles of both characters to determine their similar and dissimilar characteristics and to evaluate their effects on Pip.

into the light of the fire a half-formed terror that it might not be safe to be shut up there with him in the dead of the wild, solitary night. This impelled me to take a candle and go in and look at my dreadful burden.

He had rolled a handkerchief round his head, his face was set and lowering in his sleep. But he was asleep, and quietly, too, though he had a pistol lying on the pillow. I softly removed the key to the outside of his door, and turned it on him before I again sat down by the

**23** fire. Gradually I slipped from the chair and lay on the floor. When I awoke, the clocks were striking five, the candles were wasted out, the fire was dead, and the wind and rain intensified the thick black darkness.

*This Is the End of the Second Stage of Pip's Expectations.*

## Reading Check

1. Who is Pip's guardian?
2. What is Estella's relation to Miss Havisham?
3. What name does Herbert give Pip?
4. Where does Herbert work when Pip meets him in London?
5. What is the Castle?
6. What is Joe's purpose in coming to London to see Pip?
7. Why is Estella sent to live with a woman in Richmond?
8. What is Pip's reason for returning to the forge?
9. What does Pip receive when he comes of age?
10. Why must the convict keep his whereabouts a secret?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Novel

#### Characters

1. Dickens introduces several new characters in Stage 2 of the novel. One of the most interesting is Bentley Drummle. **a.** How does Dickens' description of Drummle make you immediately dislike him? **b.** What character from Pip's past does Bentley Drummle remind you of in physical appearance and personality?

2. Another character prominent in Stage 2 is Mr. Jaggers. **a.** What is intriguing about his behavior when Pip first sees him in London? **b.** What new facts does Pip later learn that make Jaggers seem even more mysterious?

3a. Where had Pip encountered Herbert Pocket in Stage 1 of the novel? **b.** What characteristics shown by Herbert in that encounter are still evident in him? **c.** Which of his qualities are a good influence on Pip? **d.** Which of his weaknesses does Pip pick up too easily?

4. The novels of Charles Dickens are filled with memorable portraits of characters, many of whom are eccentric, like Wemmick. Wemmick, his Aged Parent, and Miss Skiffins provide much of the humor in *Great Expectations*. **a.** What is amusing about the Aged? **b.** About Miss Skiffins? **c.** About Wemmick's "Castle" and its customs?

5. When Pip first arrives in London, Mr. Jaggers predicts, "Of course you'll go wrong somehow, but that's no fault of mine." **a.** What mistakes does Pip make in London? **b.** Do you think Pip is happy with his life there? Explain why or why not.

6. When they meet in London, Estella says to Pip: "We have no choice, you and I, but to obey our instructions. We are not free to follow our own devices, you and I." **a.** Is this true?

## 23

**Symbol.** This night is dark literally and figuratively. It is Pip's dark night of the soul. Without candles and fire, Pip is also without dreams, in a "thick black" night. Stage 2 ends with **suspense** and foreboding.

## READING CHECK

1. Jaggers (p. 730).
2. Adopted daughter (p. 733).
3. Handel (p. 735).
4. A countinghouse (p. 737).
5. Wemmick's house (p. 741).
6. To tell him Estella is home (p. 745).
7. To be introduced into polite society (p. 754).
8. His sister's funeral (p. 758).
9. Income of five hundred pounds yearly (p. 761).
10. Execution if discovered (p. 774).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

- 1a. He is "idle, proud, niggardly, reserved, and suspicious."
- 1b. Orlick.
- 2a. He is powerful; can manipulate law. 2b. Has strange house-keeper.
- 3a. Satis. 3b. Friendliness and cheer. 3c. Good manners, honesty. 3d. Easy ways.
- 4a. Deaf, but nods enthusiastically. 4b. She dresses oddly; quaintly repels Wemmick's advances. 4c. Small castlelike cottage fortified with cannon, moat.
- 5a. Spends too much, ignores Joe and Biddy. 5b. Responses will vary. He likes Herbert.
- 6a. Both are programmed: she as heartbreaker, he as gentleman; both have free wills.

**6b.** Responses will vary. Accept reasonable answers. Pip wants to be a gentleman, but makes mistakes.

**7a.** She is more attractive.

**7b.** Responses will vary. She seems to feel a little kindness for him.

**8.** Although devoted, unhappy because she doesn't reciprocate; longing to have her forever, he is miserable with her.

**9a.** Estella rejects Miss Havisham's love. **9b.** Estella is indifferent toward her. **9c.** She has screaming fit, paces all night. **9d.** Her suffering creates sympathy.

**10a.** He doesn't write or introduce Joe to friends, is rude. **10b.** He would rather be with Estella than Joe. **10c.** Old friends aren't good enough to stay with.

**11a.** Disgusted and distressed. **11b.** Responses will vary; both possible.

**12a.** Helps Herbert in business. **12b.** Capable of gratitude and generosity.

**13a.** Mrs. Joe dies; benefactor revealed; Pip continues quest for Estella. **13b.** Friendships with Herbert and Wemmick; Drummle courts Estella; Biddy leaves to teach school; Herbert gets engaged; Wemmick is married.

**14a.** Both are wet, raw, windy.

**14b.** Sea, river, wind rushing.

**14c.** Storminess intensifies Pip's loneliness, prepares for arrival of convict.

**15a.** Not entirely. Pip does not become completely blind. **15b.** Joe and Pip, Miss Havisham and Estella, Biddy and Pip, Biddy and Joe, Wemmick and Miss Skiffins, Wemmick and Aged. **15c.** Love can be good and beautiful, or destructive and ugly.

**b.** Is Pip becoming a gentleman because he enjoys being one or because his benefactor expects him to become one?

**7a.** Has Estella changed? If so, how?

**b.** How do you think she really feels about Pip?

**8.** Describe Pip's relationship with Estella in this part of the novel. How are the hopes he has of being happy with her different from the way he actually feels when he is with her?

**9a.** How does Miss Havisham's relationship to Estella change in Stage 2 of the novel?

**b.** What does Miss Havisham realize about Estella? **c.** How does she react to this realization? **d.** How does this incident gain sympathy for her?

**10.** Pip has become a snob. **a.** How is this shown in his treatment of Joe? **b.** After visiting Miss Havisham at Satis House, why does Pip decide to return immediately to London?

**c.** What is the real reason he wants to stay at the Blue Boar instead of at the forge?

**11a.** When Pip learns that it is the convict who has been his benefactor, how does he react?

**b.** Do you find his reaction one of weakness or strength? Explain.

**12a.** Where in the novel does Pip for the first time make up his own mind to do something for someone else? **b.** What does this act show about Pip's character?

## Plot

**13.** By the end of Stage 1, most of the subplots have been revealed. In Stage 2, each of the subplots is expanded—Pip and the convict, the injury to Mrs. Joe, Pip's love for Estella.

**a.** How are these subplots brought farther along in the second part of the novel?

**b.** What new subplots are introduced?

## Setting

**14.** Compare Dickens' description of the weather on the night Pip's convict arrives at his London lodgings with the description of the marshes on the day of their first meeting.

**a.** How are the two descriptions similar?

**b.** What words are used in both descriptions?

**c.** How does setting help to connect the two episodes?

## Theme

**15.** In *Great Expectations*, Dickens explores different kinds of love. Miss Havisham tells Pip that real love is "blind devotion, unquestioning self-humiliation, utter submission, trust . . . giving up your whole heart and soul to the smiter—as I did!"

**a.** Would you say that Pip's love for Estella is of the same kind? **b.** What other examples of love relationships are illustrated in the novel?

**c.** What statement does Dickens seem to be making about love through the different relationships he presents?



## Language and Vocabulary

### Differentiating Meanings

- Herbert Pocket says about his father's relationship to Miss Havisham, "He is a bad courtier and will not *propitiate* her." What is the meaning of *propitiate*? Some words that Dickens might have used instead are *appease*, *conciliate*, *mollify*, *pacify*, or *placate*. In your dictionary, check the exact meaning of each of these words. Why does *propitiate* best suggest the exact relationship between Matthew Pocket and Miss Havisham? If you had to replace *propitiate* in this sentence with a synonym, which of the other five words would you choose?

Although the English language has many synonyms, few words have exactly the same meaning. Nearly every word has a unique shade of meaning that makes it more suitable in a given context than any other word. In your speaking and writing, always try to use the word that most exactly fits your meaning.

- Use a dictionary to find at least two synonyms for each of the italicized words in the following passages. Then explain the different shades of meaning in each group of synonyms.

- a I should have been *chary* of discussing my guardian too freely even with her . . .
- b I lived in a state of *chronic* uneasiness respecting my behavior to Joe.
- c . . . I noticed that he looked about him with a *desponding* eye at breakfast time . . .

At one point Pip speaks of "the *hypocritical* Pumblechook." Earlier in the novel he refers to Miss Havisham's greedy relatives as "toadies and humbugs." The word *hypocritical* is from the Greek word *hypokritēs*, and refers to someone who tries to give the impression of being better (kinder or perhaps more honest) than he or she really is.

- Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

A *toady* plays up to people who are influential or rich. (Some dictionaries define a toady as a "toadeater.") A *humbug* is someone whose actions are deliberately deceptive and misleading.

Today we would be more likely to use the word *snob* than either *toady* or *humbug* to describe the Havisham relatives. A snob is someone who seeks to associate with those regarded as his or her superiors and who is quite cool toward those considered inferior in social position and wealth.

- 4 Which of these four words do you think most exactly describes Mr. Pumblechook?

## Writing About Literature

### ► Describing Setting

In the second part of the novel, Dickens depicts nineteenth-century London in realistic detail. What overall impression do you get of the city from his many references to its streets, its buildings, and its inhabitants? Using your main impression as the basis for a topic sentence, write a description of London as it appears in *Great Expectations*. Refer to specific passages to support your main idea.

## Looking Ahead to Stage 3

At the end of Stage 2, Pip faces the dilemma of what to do with his benefactor, who is a condemned criminal. He also has two shattering realizations that will change the course of his life: he has deserted Joe and the life at the forge for expectations that have vanished; and Miss Havisham has never intended for him and Estella to marry. How do you think Pip's life will change as a result of these realizations?

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

1. *Propitiate* means "to win or regain good will of," "to cause to become favorably inclined."

2. *Propitiate* is best because implies an offended person is being soothed to gain good will. *Appease* is next best word. Pocket not interested in Miss Havisham's good will.

3a. *Chary* implies excessive caution in giving, doing, or saying. Two possible synonyms for *chary* are *cautious* and *wary*.

3b. *Chronic* means "firmly established" and applies to negative conditions persisting despite efforts to cure them. Two possible synonyms are *inveterate* and *confirmed*.

3c. *Desponding* implies deep dejection and loss of hope. Two synonyms are *desperate* and *hopeless*.

4. *Hypocritical* is best word for Mr. Pumblechook, although all four can apply. For more extensive discussion, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

Remind students that the **setting** is not merely the physical surroundings or environment of a story but also historical period; that Stage 2 of Pip's expectations occurs in the early nineteenth century is just as important as its occurring in London.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO STAGE 3

Students can base their answers on the events and personalities of Stages 1 and 2.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to trace the development of Pip's **character** through his interaction with other characters in Stage 3. For a complete list of objectives, see the *Teacher's Manual*.

## VOCABULARY

The underlined words are in the Glossary. The **Language and Vocabulary** exercise on p. 833 provides students with practice identifying and understanding words with Latin roots.

## FOCUS / MOTIVATION

Ask volunteers to describe any changes in attitudes and ambitions they have undergone in the last several years. What experiences, events, or people have been responsible for these changes?

# The Third Stage of Pip's Expectations

## Chapter 30

*Pip confronts Jaggers.*

### Chapter 30

**1** What "other thoughts" might be held at a distance? Responses will vary. Perhaps thoughts of Estella, thoughts of his own past actions and attitudes, future prospects.

**2** **Setting.** Reflects Pip's state of mind as he searches for solution to his dilemma.

**3** **Fain** is an archaic word meaning "glad" or "compelled by circumstance."

**4** **Foreshadowing.** At one point, Biddy describes Orlick as wearing dust-colored clothes. Foreshadows appearance of malevolent person, if not Orlick himself.

**5** **What is Pip's situation? Why is he unable to consider his situation?** Responses will vary. Situation that causes his turmoil consists of sudden arrival of convict, revelation of identity of benefactor, need to conceal him, man hiding on the stairs, and stranger who was following convict. Pip is unable to consider situation because he is overwhelmed by knowledge that convict is benefactor; he has also had a restless night, thus rendering him too tired to make decisions.

**1** It was fortunate for me that I had to take precautions to insure (so far as I could) the safety of my dreaded visitor; for, this thought pressing on me when I awoke held other thoughts at a distance. The impossibility of keeping him concealed in the chambers was self-evident. I was looked after by an inflammatory old female, assisted by an animated rag-bag whom she called her niece; and to keep a room secret from them would be to invite curiosity. I resolved to announce in the morning that my uncle had unexpectedly come from the country.

**2** This course I decided on while I was yet groping about in the darkness for the means of getting a light. Not stumbling on the means

**3** after all, I was fain to go out to get the watchman to come with his lantern. Now, in groping my way down the black staircase, I fell over something, and that something was a man crouching in a corner. As the man made no answer when I asked him what he did there, I ran to the lodge and urged the watchman to come quickly. We examined the staircase from the bottom to the top and found no one there.

It troubled me that there should have been a lurker on the stairs on that night of all nights in the year, and I asked the watchman whether he had admitted at his gate any gentleman who had been dining out.

"The night being so bad, sir," said the watchman, "uncommon few have come in at my gate. Besides them three gentlemen that I know, I don't call to mind another since about eleven o'clock, when a stranger asked for you."

"My uncle," I muttered. "Yes."

"You saw him, sir?"

"Yes. Oh, yes."

"Likewise the person with him?"

"Person with him!" I repeated. "What sort of person?"

**4** The watchman had not particularly noticed; he should say a working person; to the best of his belief, he had a dust-colored kind of clothes on, under a dark coat.

My mind was much troubled by these two circumstances taken together. I lighted my fire, which burned with a raw pale flare at that time of the morning, and fell into a doze before it.

**5** I was not able to consider my own situation, nor could I do so yet. At last the old woman and the niece came in. I imparted how my uncle had come in the night and was then asleep, and how the breakfast preparations were to be modified accordingly.

By and by, his door opened and he came out. I could not bring myself to bear the sight of him, and I thought he had a worse look by daylight.

"I do not even know," said I, speaking low as he took his seat at the table, "by what name to call you. I have given out that you are my uncle."

"That's it, dear boy! Call me uncle."

"You assumed some name, I suppose, on board ship?"

"Yes, dear boy. I took the name of Provis."

"Do you mean to keep that name?"

"Why, yes, dear boy, it's as good as another—unless you'd like another."

"What is your real name?" I asked him in a whisper.

"Magwitch," he answered in the same tone; "chrisen'd Abel."

"When you came into the Temple last night," said I, "and asked the watchman the way here, had you anyone with you?"

"With me? No, dear boy."

## MOTIVATIONAL SUMMARY

Pip has discovered his benefactor to be Magwitch, whose presence creates many complications. Magwitch, the convict Pip aided in the graveyard long ago, is a fugitive from the law and is hotly pursued by a former accomplice who

has cause to see Magwitch silenced. To save his benefactor from certain death, Pip and friends conceive a daring escape plan. Will they be successful?

## PRESENTATION

While Stage 2 focused on the contradiction between Pip's "expectations" and reality, Stage 3 shows how Pip behaves when he finally faces this reality. Despite all of the changes in Pip, Dickens changes his manner of presenting him

But there was someone there?"

"I didn't take particular notice," he said du-  
biously, "not knowing the ways of the place.  
But I think there *was* a person, too, come in  
alonger me."

6 "Are you known in London?"

"I hope not," said he, giving his neck a jerk  
with his forefinger that made me turn hot and  
sick.

"Were you known in London once?"

"Not over and above, dear boy. I was in the  
provinces mostly."

"Were you—tried—in London?"

"Which time?" said he, with a sharp look.

"The last time."

He nodded. "First knowed Mr. Jaggers that  
way. Jaggers was for me. And what I done is  
worked out and paid for!"

He ate in a ravenous way that was very disa-  
greeable, and all his actions were uncouth,  
noisy, and greedy. Some of his teeth had failed  
him since I saw him eat on the marshes, and as  
he turned his food in his mouth, and turned  
his head sideways to bring his strongest fangs  
to bear upon it, he looked terribly like a hun-  
gry old dog. "I'm a heavy grubber, dear boy,"  
he said, as a polite kind of apology when he  
had made an end of his meal. "Similarly, I  
must have my smoke." He got up and brought  
out a short black pipe and a handful of loose  
tobacco. Having filled his pipe, he took a live  
coal from the fire with the tongs and lighted  
his pipe at it, and turned round on the  
hearthrug with his back to the fire. He took out  
of his pocket a great thick pocketbook, burst-  
ing with papers, and tossed it on the table.

8 "There's something worth spending in that  
there book, dear boy. It's yourn. All I've got  
ain't mine; it's yourn. Don't you be afeerd on  
it. There's more where that come from. I've  
come to the old country fur to see my gentle-  
man spend his money *like* a gentleman. That'll  
be *my* pleasure. *My* pleasure'll be fur to see

him do it. And blast you all!" he wound up.  
"Blast you every one, from the judge in his wig  
to the colonist a-stirring up the dust, I'll show  
a better gentleman than the whole kit on you  
put together!"

"Stop!" said I, almost in a frenzy of fear and  
dislike. "I want to speak to you. I want to know  
what is to be done. I want to know how you are  
to be kept out of danger, how long you are  
going to stay, what projects you have."

"Look'ee here, Pip," said he, laying his hand  
on my arm in a suddenly altered and subdued  
manner. "I forgot myself half a minute ago.  
What I said was low; that's what it was; low.  
Look'ee here, Pip. Look over it. I ain't a-going  
to be low."

"First," I resumed, half groaning, "what pre-  
cautions can be taken against your being recog-  
nized and seized?"

"Well, dear boy, the danger ain't so great.  
Without I was informed agen, the danger ain't  
so much to signify. There's Jaggers, and  
there's Wemmick, and there's you. Who else is  
there to inform?"

"Is there no chance person who might iden-  
tify you in the street?" said I.

10 "Well," he returned, "there ain't many. Still,  
look'ee here, Pip. If the danger had been fifty  
times as great, I should ha' come to see you,  
mind you, just the same."

"And how long do you remain?"

"How long?" said he, taking his black pipe  
from his mouth and dropping his jaw as he  
stared at me. "I'm not a-going back. I've come  
for good."

"Where are you to live?" said I. "What is to  
be done with you? Where will you be safe?"

"Dear boy," he returned, "there's disguising  
wigs can be bought for money, and there's hair  
powder, and spectacles, and black clothes—  
and what not. As to the where and how of liv-  
ing, dear boy, give me your own opinions on  
it."

6

**Characterization.** Magwitch is suspicious of people who ask him about his criminal past, as shown by his responses to Pip's questions. He wants to be treated like human being, not prisoner; his crimes are "worked out and paid for!"

7

Most disagreeable things to Pip are Magwitch's bad manners, common dialect, ostracism from polite society, and his seaman's clothes.

8

Magwitch has not used his money to better himself in any way; his pleasure comes from seeing what the money has done for Pip.

9

**What is Pip's tone here? What might account for his behavior?** Responses will vary. Pip is stern but on verge of panic. Pip's world has been shattered by arrival of Magwitch, and he is afraid, disappointed, and angry. Reappearance of convict reminds Pip of frightening first meeting. Convict's criminal past, wretched appearance, and coarse and common ways disgust Pip. He realizes his expectations have been illusion.

10

**Characterization.** Magwitch, too, has "expectations" so important that they justify any risk; Magwitch is irrational in his desire to make Pip a gentleman.



very little; we still see Dickens' use of **irony** and his use of **setting** to establish atmosphere. The same concern with love, too, is apparent in Stage 3—although the focus changes from Pip's introverted and worshipful love of Estella to his love for Magwitch, which demands action and sacri-

fice. Understandably, the atmosphere of this stage is one of sadness and disappointment because, as Pip says, "My great expectations had all dissolved, like our own marsh mists before the sun." But, Pip's story is a hopeful one because of the novel's surprising conclusion and because Pip

chooses reality over illusion.

**11**  
**Characterization.** Magwitch (Provis) trusts only chosen few. Ironic that Magwitch employs method of oath used by legal system that imprisons him.

**12**  
**Characterization.** Portrayal of Jaggers' high intelligence is reinforced here. Jaggers seems to know, almost telepathically, what Pip has on his mind.

**13**  
**Theme.** *Great Expectations* is concerned with **conflict** between illusion and reality. Jaggers' words might serve as statement of one of book's themes.

**14**  
**Why does Pip sigh?** Responses will vary. Pip is disappointed, dejected, and defeated. Jaggers' words ring true, and Pip's sigh might be interpreted as Pip's recognition of self-deception.

**15**  
This part of scene is humorous in that Pip adopts Jaggers' style of short, to-the-point responses, while Jaggers assumes Pip's bumbling tendency to make mistakes.

It appeared to me that I could do no better than secure him some quiet lodging hard by.

**11** That the secret must be confided to Herbert was plain to me. But it was by no means so plain to Mr. Provis (I resolved to call him by that name), who reserved his consent to Herbert's participation until he should have seen him. "And even then, dear boy," said he, pulling a greasy little clasped black Testament out of his pocket, "we'll have him on his oath." The book had the appearance of having been **14** stolen from some court of justice.

There being a respectable lodging house in Essex Street, almost within hail of my windows, I repaired to that house and was so fortunate as to secure the second floor for my uncle, Mr. Provis. I then went from shop to shop, making such purchases as were necessary to change his appearance. This business transacted, I turned my face, on my own account, to Little Britain. Mr. Jaggers was at his desk, but seeing me enter, got up immediately and stood before his fire.

**12** "Now, Pip," said he, "be careful."

"I will, sir," I returned.

"Don't commit yourself," said Mr. Jaggers, "and don't commit anyone. You understand—anyone."

Of course I saw that he knew the man was come.

"I merely want, Mr. Jaggers," said I, "to assure myself what I have been told is true. I have been informed by a person named Abel Magwitch that he is the benefactor so long unknown to me."

"That is the man," said Mr. Jaggers, "—in New South Wales."<sup>1</sup>

"And only he?" said I.

"And only he," said Mr. Jaggers.

"I am not so unreasonable, sir, as to think

you at all responsible for my wrong conclusions; but I always supposed it was Miss Havisham."

"As you say, Pip," returned Mr. Jaggers, "I am not at all responsible for that."

"And yet it looked so like it, sir," I pleaded with a downcast heart.

"Not a particle of evidence, Pip," said Mr. Jaggers. "Take nothing on its looks; take everything on evidence. There's no better rule."

"I have no more to say," said I, with a sigh, after standing silent for a little while. "I have verified my information, and there's an end."

"I communicated to Magwitch—in New South Wales—when he first wrote to me—from New South Wales—the caution that he was not at all likely to obtain a pardon, that he was expatriated for the term of his natural life, and that his presenting himself in this country would be an act of felony, rendering him liable to the extreme penalty of the law. I gave Magwitch that caution," said Mr. Jaggers, looking hard at me. "I wrote it to New South Wales. He guided himself by it, no doubt."

"No doubt," said I.

"I have been informed by Wemmick," pursued Mr. Jaggers, still looking hard at me, "that he has received a letter, from a colonist of the name of Purvis, or——"

"Or Provis," I suggested.

"Or Provis—thank you, Pip. Perhaps it is Provis? Perhaps you know it's Provis?"

"Yes," said I.

"You know it's Provis. A letter from a colonist of the name of Provis, asking for the particulars of your address, on behalf of Magwitch. Wemmick sent him the particulars, I understand, by return of post. Probably it is through Provis that you have received the explanation of Magwitch—in New South Wales?"

"It came through Provis," I replied.

"Good day, Pip," said Mr. Jaggers, offering

1. **New South Wales:** a state in Australia; formerly a territory to which many convicts were transported, or exiled. Magwitch had been sentenced there for life.



### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Exploring the Subject**

In this photograph, Pip questions Jaggers about his role in Magwitch's return. The actors' facial expressions reveal a great deal about the attitudes and demeanors of the two characters during this scene. Pip, with slightly raised eyebrows, seems to be inquisitive, perhaps confused. Jaggers wears a matter-of-fact look and buries himself in paperwork, paying Pip little mind and seemingly treating Pip's dilemma lightly.

#### **Ideas for Writing**

The reader learns a great deal about Pip and his life during the novel, but the details of Jaggers' life remain somewhat of a mystery. While his job, the way he carries himself, and his relationships with other characters are known, the reader really knows very little about this important and pivotal character. Ask students to write a biography of Jaggers in which they imagine where and when he was born, who his parents were and what they were like, what he was like as a child, where he went to school, what his favorite hobbies or pastimes were, what he liked to eat, what his career was like, who his friends were, and so on.

16

Pip's description of Magwitch in new clothes typifies disgust Pip feels for Magwitch's lowly behavior.

17

**Characterization.** Provis' immediately drawn weapon shows that he is aware of danger of his situation and is used to violence.

18

Danger of situation is communicated by Provis' insistence on Herbert's swearing oath. An oath is a binding contract; demanding one is quite aggressive.

## Chapter 31

1

**Characterization.** Pip is center of Provis' world; here, for instance, he calls Herbert "Pip's comrade." Provis defines everything by its relation to Pip.

his hand. "Glad to have seen you. In writing by post to Magwitch—in New South Wales—or in communicating with him through Provis, have the goodness to mention that the particulars and vouchers of our long account shall be sent to you, together with the balance; for there is still a balance remaining. Good day, Pip!"

Next day the clothes I had ordered all came home, and he put them on. To my thinking there was something in him that made it hopeless to attempt to disguise him. The more I dressed him, and the better I dressed him, the more he looked like the slouching fugitive on the marshes. He dragged one of his legs as if there were still a weight of iron on it, and from head to foot there was convict in the very grain of the man.

For five days, expecting Herbert all the time, I dared not go out except when I took Provis for an airing after dark. At length, one evening when dinner was over and I had dropped into a slumber quite worn out, I was roused by the welcome footstep on the staircase. Provis, who had been asleep too, staggered up at the noise I made, and in an instant I saw his jackknife shining in his hand.

"Quiet! It's Herbert!" I said.

"Handel, my dear fellow, how are you, and again how are you, and again how are you? I seem to have been gone a twelvemonth! Why, so I must have been, for you have grown quite thin and pale! Handel, my—Halloa! I beg your pardon."

He was stopped in his running on and in his shaking hands with me, by seeing Provis. Provis, regarding him with a fixed attention, was slowly putting up his jackknife and groping in another pocket for something else.

"Herbert, my dear friend," said I, shutting the double doors, while Herbert stood staring and wondering, "something very strange has happened. This is—a visitor of mine."

"It's all right, dear boy!" said Provis, coming

forward, with his little clasped black book, and then addressing himself to Herbert. "Take it in your right hand. Lord strike you dead on the spot if ever you split<sup>2</sup> in any way sumever. Kiss it!"

"Do so, as he wishes it," I said to Herbert. So Herbert, looking at me with a friendly uneasiness and amazement, complied, and Provis immediately shaking hands with him, said, "Now you're on your oath, you know. And never believe me on mine, if Pip shan't make a gentleman on you!"

## Chapter 31

*Two men, named Compeyson and Arthur, step out of the past.*

In vain should I attempt to describe the astonishment and disquiet of Herbert, when he and I and Provis sat down before the fire, and I recounted the whole of the secret. Enough that I saw my own feelings reflected in Herbert's face, and, not least among them, my repugnance toward the man who had done so much for me.

1 "Look'ee here, Pip's comrade," he said to Herbert, after having discoursed for some time, "I know very well that once since I come back I've been low. But don't you fret yourself on that score. I ain't made Pip a gentleman, and Pip ain't a-goin' to make you a gentleman, not fur me not to know what's due to ye both."

Herbert said, "Certainly," but remained perplexed and dismayed. We were anxious for the time when he would go to his lodging and leave us together, but it was midnight before I saw him safely in at his own dark door. When

2. split: slang for "inform."



it closed upon him, I experienced the first moment of relief I had known since the night of his arrival.

Herbert received me with open arms, and I had never felt before so blessedly what it is to have a friend. When he had spoken some sound words of sympathy and encouragement, we sat down to consider the question, What was to be done?

2 “What,” said I to Herbert, “what is to be done? He is intent upon various new expenses—horses, and carriages, and lavish appearances of all kinds. He must be stopped somehow.”

“You mean that you can’t accept——”

“How can I?” I interposed, as Herbert paused. “Think of him! Look at him!”

An involuntary shudder passed over both of us.

“Then,” said I, “after all, stopping short here, never taking another penny from him, think what I owe him already! Then again, I am heavily in debt—very heavily for me, who have now no expectations—and I have been

3 bred to no calling, and I am fit for nothing.”

“Well, well, well!” Herbert remonstrated, “Don’t say fit for nothing.”

“What am I fit for? I know only one thing that I am fit for, and that is to go for a soldier.”

“You would be infinitely better in Clarriker’s house, small as it is. I am working up toward a partnership, you know.”

Poor fellow! He little suspected with whose money.

“But there is another question,” said Herbert. “This is an ignorant determined man, who has long had one fixed idea. More than that, he seems to me (I may misjudge him) to be a man of a desperate and fierce character. Think of this! He comes here at the peril of his life, for the realization of his fixed idea. After all his toil and waiting, you destroy his idea, and make his gains worthless to him. Do you

4 see nothing that he might do under the disappointment?”

“I have seen it, Herbert. Nothing has been in my thoughts so distinctly as his putting himself in the way of being taken.”

“Then you may rely upon it,” said Herbert.

5 “That would be his reckless course if you forsook him. The first and the main thing to be done is to get him out of England. You will have to go with him, and then he may be induced to go. That done, extricate yourself, in Heaven’s name, and we’ll see it out together, dear old boy.”

Provis came round at the appointed time, took out his jackknife, and sat down to his meal. He was full of plans “for his gentleman’s coming out strong and like a gentleman” and urged me to begin speedily upon the pocket-book, which he had left in my possession. When he had made an end of his breakfast, and was wiping his knife on his leg, I said to him, without a word of preface:

6 “After you were gone last night, I told my friend of the struggle that the soldiers found you engaged in on the marshes. You remember?”

“Remember!” said he. “I think so!”

“We want to know something about that man—and about you. It is strange to know no more about either, and particularly you, than I was able to tell last night. Is not this as good a time as another for our knowing more?”

“Well,” he said, after consideration. “You’re on your oath, you know, Pip’s comrade?”

“Assuredly,” replied Herbert.

“And look’ee here! Wotever I done, is worked out and paid for,” he insisted again.

He stuck his pipe in a buttonhole of his coat, spread a hand on each knee, and, after turning an angry eye on the fire for a few silent moments, looked around at us and said what follows:

“Dear boy and Pip’s comrade, I am not

2 **Irony.** Pip shudders to think of Provis, but he has only recently acquired the trappings of gentility himself; he knows, deep down, that people like Provis, Joe, and Biddy are just as human as he is.

3 Although he is being too hard on himself, Pip here is close to understanding his vanity. His pride had been based on his lucky acquisition of money, not his internal values.

4 Pip and Herbert are more concerned about Provis’ becoming violent than about his disappointed dreams.

5 **Plot.** Herbert’s idea turns into daring escape plan. Escape episode is to serve as novel’s climax.

6 Pip is referring to encounters with Magwitch (Provis) in his childhood.

7 Provis does not want his life trivialized; he has dignity.

8 Provis' repetitive phrases emphasize monotony and hopelessness of his life.

9 *Is there any relationship between Magwitch's childhood and Pip's? What inferences about theme can be made based on a comparison of Magwitch's and Pip's lives?* Both Magwitch and Pip began life as orphans; however, Pip was cared for by loving Joe. Magwitch was forced to fend for himself, leading to life of crime. Dickens may be making comment about nature of human condition: criminals are made, not born.

10 *Foreshadowing.* It will be revealed later that Compeyson is Miss Havisham's faithless fiancé and Arthur is her half brother.

11 *Is there actually someone in Arthur's room? Who might the woman be?* No one is in room; Arthur is having a nightmare. The angry woman, dressed in white, might be a jilted bride. More astute readers might conclude that Arthur is dreaming about Miss Havisham.

a-going fur to tell you my life, like a song or a storybook. But to give it you short and handy, I'll put it at once into a mouthful of English. In jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail, in jail and out of jail. There, you've got it. That's my life pretty much, down to such times as I got shipped off, arter Pip stood my friend.

"I've done everything to, pretty well—except hanged. I've been locked up, and stuck in the stocks, and whipped and worried and drove. I've no more notion where I was born than you have. I first became aware of myself down in Essex, a-thieving turnips for my living. Summun had run away from me—a man—a tinker—and he'd took the fire with him, and left me wery cold. I knowed my name to be Magwitch, christened Abel. So fur as I could find, there warn't a soul that see young Abel Magwitch, with as little on him as in him, but wot caught fright at him, and either drove him off or took him up.<sup>1</sup> When I was a ragged little creetur as much to be pitied as ever I see, I got the name of being hardened. 'This is a terrible hardened one,' they says to prison visitors, picking out me. 'May be said to live in jails, this boy.' They always went on agen me about the Devil. But what the devil was I to do? I must put something into my stomach, mustn't I?"

"Tramping, begging, thieving, working sometimes when I could—though that warn't as often as you may think, till you put the question whether you would ha' been over-ready to give me work yourselves—a bit of a poacher, a bit of a laborer, a bit of a wagoner, a bit of a haymaker, a bit of a hawker, a bit of most things that don't pay and lead to trouble, I got to be a man.

"At Epsom races, a matter of over twenty years ago, I got acquainted wi' a man whose skull I'd crack wi' this poker, like the claw of a lobster, if I'd got it on this hob. His right name

was Compeyson; and that's the man, dear boy, what you see me a-pounding in the ditch. He set up fur a gentleman, this Compeyson, and had learning. He was a smooth one to talk and was a dab at the ways of gentlefolks. He was good-looking too.

"Compeyson took me on to be his man and pardner. And what was Compeyson's business in which we was to go pardners? Compeyson's business was the swindling, handwriting forging, stolen bank note passing, and suchlike. All sorts of traps as Compeyson could set with his head, and let another man in for, was Compeyson's business. He'd no more heart than a iron file, he was as cold as death, and he had the head of the Devil.

10 "There was another in with Compeyson, as was called Arthur. Him and Compeyson had been in a bad thing with a rich lady some years afore, and they made a pot of money by it; but Compeyson betted and gamed, and he'd have run through the king's taxes. So, Arthur was a-dying and a-dying poor and with the horrors on him, and Compeyson's wife was a-having pity on him when she could and Compeyson was a-having pity on nothing and nobody.

"I might a-took warning by Arthur, but I didn't. I begun wi' Compeyson, and a poor tool I was in his hands. Arthur lived at the top of Compeyson's house. The second or third time as ever I see him, he came a-tearing down into Compeyson's parlor late at night, in only a flannel gown, with his hair all in a sweat, and he says to Compeyson's wife, 'Sally, she really is upstairs alonger me, now, and I can't get rid of her. She's all in white,' he says, 'wi' white flowers in her hair, and she's awful mad, and she's got a shroud hanging over her arm, and she says she'll put it on me at five in the morn-  
11 ing.'

"Says Compeyson: 'Why, you fool, don't you know she's got a living body? And how should she be up there, without coming through the

1. **took him up:** put him under arrest.

door, or in at the window, and up the stairs?"

- 12 "I don't know how she's there," says Arthur, shivering dreadful with the horrors, 'but she's standing in the corner at the foot of the bed. And over where her heart's broke—you broke it!—there's drops of blood.'

"Compeyson's wife and me took him up to bed agen, and he raved most dreadful. 'Why, look at her!' he cries out. 'She's a-shaking the shroud at me! She'll put it on me, and then I'm done for! Take it away from her, take it away!' And then he kep on a-talking to her, and answering of her, till I half believed I see her myself.

- 13 "He rested pretty quiet till it might want a few minutes of five, and then he screams out, 'Here she is! She's got the shroud again. She's unfolding it. She's coming out of the corner. She's coming to the bed. Hold me, both of you—one on each side—don't let her touch me with it.' Then he lifted himself up hard, and was dead.

"Compeyson took it easy as a good riddance for both sides. Him and me was soon busy, and I'll simply say to you, dear boy, and Pip's comrade, that that man got me into such nets as made me his slave. I was always in debt to him, always under his thumb, always a-working, always a-getting into danger. My missis as I had the hard time wi'—Stop though! I ain't brought her in—"

- 14 He looked about him in a confused way, turned his face to the fire, and spread his hands broader on his knees. "There ain't no need to go into it," he said, looking round once more. "At last, me and Compeyson was both committed for felony—on a charge of putting stolen notes in circulation. Compeyson says to me, 'Separate defenses, no communication,'<sup>2</sup> and that was all. And I was so miserable poor

that I sold all the clothes I had, except what hung on my back, afore I could get Jagers.

"When he was put in the dock,<sup>3</sup> I noticed first of all what a gentleman Compeyson looked, wi' his curly hair and his black clothes and his white pocket handkercher, and what a common sort of a wretch I looked. When the prosecution opened, I noticed how heavy it all bore on me, and how light on him. When the evidence was giv in the box,<sup>4</sup> I noticed how it was always me that had come for'ard, and could be swore to, how it was always me that the money had been paid to, how it was always me that seemed to work the thing and get the profit. But when the defense come on, then I see the plan plainer; for, says the counselor for Compeyson, 'My lord and gentlemen, here you have afore you, side by side, two persons as your eyes can separate wide; one well brought up, one ill brought up.'

- 15 "And when the verdict come, warn't it Compeyson as was recommended to mercy on account of good character and bad company, and giving up all the information he could agen me, and warn't it me as got never a word but guilty? And when I says to Compeyson, 'Once out of this court, I'll smash that face of yourn!' ain't it Compeyson as prays the judge to be protected, and gets two turnkeys stood betwixt us? And when we're sentenced, ain't it him as gets seven year, and me fourteen, and ain't it him as the judge is sorry for, because he might a-done so well, and ain't it me as the judge perceives to be a old offender of violent passion, likely to come to worse?"

He had worked himself into a state of great excitement, but he checked it, and stretching out his hand toward me, said, "I ain't a-going to be low, dear boy!

"We was in the same prison ship, but I

3. dock: the place where prisoners stand before the court.

4. box: the witness chair.

## 12

**Foreshadowing.** Anticipates disclosure of Compeyson's relationship to Miss Havisham. Similarity of woman in vision to Miss Havisham foreshadows later disclosure that two figures are same person.

## 13

Arthur's delirious hallucination shows guilt strong enough to cause insanity and death; Compeyson felt nothing.

## 14

**Foreshadowing.** Mysterious secrecy anticipates later disclosure that Molly and Magwitch had been married and that they are Estella's parents. Provis' attitude toward his lost wife and child partially explains why he was so eager to "adopt" Pip and make him a gentleman.

## 15

Evidence of Dickens' criticism of English penal system. Judge, like Pip, bases decision on appearance and illusion instead of on reality of Compeyson's guilt.

2. Separate . . . communication: Each man would handle his own case, and there would be no communication between them while defending themselves.



## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage may be used to give students practice in the reading skill of distinguishing between fact and opinion. Ask students to read the passage carefully and choose the item that best answers the question: Which of the

following statements is an opinion presented in the selection?

**A.** Pip has been told that Estella has gone to Satis House. (Fact. Estella's maid told him this.) **B.** Compeyson believes Pip is a coward. (Irrelevant opinion. There is no mention of this in the pas-

sage.) **C.** If Compeyson is alive, he will conceal the identity of his enemy. (Contradicted opinion. Pip believes, based on past behavior, that Compeyson will help the authorities find his enemy.) **D.** Compeyson will try to eliminate his enemy by becoming an informant. (Correct.)

16

Provis loves Pip because he thinks Pip is innately noble and altruistic. Ironically, however, the young Pip believed more from fear than altruism.

17

*Why didn't Magwitch just kill Compeyson?* Prison was worse fate for Compeyson than death, and Magwitch wanted revenge more than freedom.

18

*Complication.* This revelation entangles subplots involving Miss Havisham and Magwitch.

## Chapter 32

1

*Why doesn't Pip want Provis to know about Estella?* Responses will vary. Pip probably fears that Provis would embarrass him by insisting upon meeting her and also that this meeting might get back to Miss Havisham, who might learn Provis' true identity.

2

Pip is still not above lying to see Estella.

couldn't get at him for long, though I tried. At last I come behind him and hit him on the cheek to turn him round and get a smashing one at him, when I was seen and seized. The black hole of that ship warn't a strong one. I escaped to the shore, and I was a-hiding among the graves there, envying them as was in 'em and all over, when I first see my boy!"

16 He regarded me with a look of affection that made him almost abhorrent to me again, though I had felt great pity for him.

"By my boy, I was giv to understand as Compeyson was out on them marshes too. Upon my soul, I half believed he escaped in his terror to get quit of me, not knowing it was me as had got ashore. I hunted him down. I smashed his face. 'And now,' says I, 'as the worst thing I can do, caring nothing for myself, I'll drag you back.' And I'd have swum off, towing him by the hair, if it had come to that, and I'd a got him aboard without the soldiers.

17

"Of course he'd much the best of it to the last and his punishment was light. I was put in irons, brought to trial again, and sent for life. I didn't stop for life, dear boy and Pip's comrade, being here."

He slowly took his tangle of tobacco from his pocket, plucked his pipe from his buttonhole, slowly filled it, and began to smoke.

"Is he dead?" I asked after a silence.

"Is who dead, dear boy?"

"Compeyson."

"He hopes I am, if he's alive, you may be sure," with a fierce look. "I never heard no more of him."

Herbert had been writing with his pencil in the cover of a book. He softly pushed the book over to me, as Provis stood smoking with his eyes on the fire, and I read in it:

18 "Young Havisham's name was Arthur. Compeyson is the man who professed to be Miss Havisham's lover."

I shut the book and nodded slightly to Herbert, and put the book by; but we neither of us said anything, and both looked at Provis as he stood smoking by the fire.

## Chapter 32

*Pip and Drummle exchange sharp words.*

► A new fear had entered in my mind by his narrative. If Compeyson were alive and should discover his return, I could hardly doubt the consequence. That Compeyson would hesitate to release himself for good from a dreaded enemy by the safe means of becoming an informer, was scarcely to be imagined.

Never had I breathed, and never would I breathe—or so I resolved—a word of Estella to

1 Provis. But I said to Herbert that before I could go abroad, I must see both Estella and Miss Havisham. On my presenting myself at Mrs. Brandley's, Estella's maid was called to tell me that Estella had gone into the country. Where? To Satis House. She had never gone there before without me, and I went home again in complete discomfiture. ◀

Next day, I had the meanness to feign that I was under a binding promise to go down to Joe. Provis was to be strictly careful while I was gone, and Herbert was to take the charge of him that I had taken.

Having thus cleared the way for my expedition to Miss Havisham's, I set off by the early morning coach. When we drove up to the Blue Boar, whom should I see come out under the gateway, toothpick in hand, to look at the coach, but Bentley Drummle!

As he pretended not to see me, I pretended not to see him. It was a very lame pretense on both sides; the lamer because we both went into the coffee room. I sat at my table while he

3 stood before the fire. By degrees it became an enormous injury to me that he stood before the fire, and I got up, determined to have my share of it. I had to put my hands behind his legs for the poker when I went up to the fireplace to stir the fire, but still pretended not to know him.

"Is this a cut?"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Drummle.

"Oh?" said I, poker in hand. "It's you, is it? How do you do? I was wondering who it was who kept the fire off."

With that I poked tremendously, and having done so, planted myself side by side with Mr. Drummle, my shoulders squared, and my back to the fire.

"Large tract of marshes about here, I believe?" said Drummle.

"Yes. What of that?" said I.

Mr. Drummle looked at me and laughed.

"Are you amused, Mr. Drummle?"

4 "No," said he, "not particularly. I am going out for a ride in the saddle. I mean to explore those marshes for amusement. Out-of-the-way villages there, they tell me. Curious little public houses—and smithies—and that. Waiter!"

"Yes, sir."

"Is that horse of mine ready?"

"Brought round to the door, sir."

"I say. Look here. The lady won't ride today; the weather won't do."

"Very good, sir."

5 "And I don't dine, because I am going to dine at the lady's."

"Very good, sir."

Then Drummle glanced at me with an insolent triumph. One thing was manifest to both of us, and that was that until relief came, neither of us could relinquish the fire. There we stood, well squared up before it, shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot, with our hands behind us, not budging an inch.

After glancing at him once or twice, in an increased state of smoldering ferocity, I said:

"Mr. Drummle, I did not seek this conversation, and I don't think it's an agreeable one."

"I'm sure it's not," said he superciliously, over his shoulder.

"And therefore," I went on, "with your leave, I will suggest that we hold no kind of communication in future."

"Quite my opinion," said Drummle. "But don't lose your temper. Haven't you lost enough without that?"

6 "What do you mean, sir?"

"Waiter," said Drummle, by way of answering me.

The waiter reappeared.

"Look here, you sir. You quite understand that the young lady don't ride today, and that I dine at the young lady's?"

"Quite so, sir!"

How long we might have remained in this ridiculous position it is impossible to say, but for the incursion of three thriving farmers, who came into the coffee room unbuttoning their greatcoats and rubbing their hands, and before whom, as they charged at the fire, we were obliged to give way. I saw him through the window, seizing his horse's mane, and mounting in his blundering brutal manner, and calling for a 7 light for the cigar in his mouth. A man in a dust-colored dress appeared, and as Drummle leaned down from the saddle and lighted his cigar and laughed, with a jerk of his head toward the coffee-room windows, the slouching shoulders and ragged hair of this man, whose back was toward me, reminded me of Orlick.

Too heavily out of sorts to care, I washed the weather and the journey from my face and hands and went out to the memorable old 8 house that it would have been so much the better for me never to have entered, never to have seen.

In the room where the dressing table stood,

3 Almost childish squabbling over fireplace underscores conflict between Pip and Drummle.

4 **Characterization.** Drummle is making fun of Pip's origins. He is obviously a snob.

5 **To whom is Drummle referring?** Drummle is gloating over Estella's favor—favor Pip knows he does not have.

6 **What does Drummle mean?** Drummle knows that Pip has lost Estella; Drummle is dining with her while Pip is not.

7 Orlick's "dust-colored dress" reminds reader of intruder on night Magwitch appeared at Pip's door. Reader is led to suspect the intruder was Orlick himself.

8 **To what house is Pip alluding? Why does he say it would have been better if he had never seen or entered the house?** Pip is referring to Satis House, where he met Miss Havisham and Estella and began tragic pursuit of "great expectations" that led to his downfall and unhappiness.

1. **cut:** a deliberate refusal to recognize someone.

9

**Do Miss Havisham and Estella really see a change in Pip, or is Pip imagining things? Has Pip changed?** Responses will vary. They may have only been exchanging looks of surprise at Pip's unexpected visit. Pip has changed; these changes are so great that Pip thinks they show in his face.

10

Comment suggests recurring theme: individuals are shaped by circumstances. Miss Havisham's bitterness, Magwitch's life, Pip's expectations, Estella's personality are all due to forces beyond their control.

11

Pip asks these questions not to accuse, but to lead to something else. Stripped of illusions, Pip seeks concrete realities.

12

**Characterization.** Pip shows heretofore uncharacteristic rationality. He calmly waits for Miss Havisham's temper to cool before advancing to next step in his argument.

13

**What is Miss Havisham's reaction?** Responses will vary. Indignation at Pip's befriending of her enemies; surprise that he met Pockets at all; curiosity to know what Pip is getting at. Punctuation indicates she is speaking matter-of-factly.

and where the wax candles burned on the wall, I found Miss Havisham and Estella; Miss Havisham seated on a settee near the fire, and Estella on a cushion at her feet. Estella was knitting and Miss Havisham was looking on. They both raised their eyes as I went in, and both saw an alteration in me. I derived that from the look they interchanged.

10 "And what wind," said Miss Havisham, "blows you here, Pip?"

Though she looked steadily at me, I saw that she was rather confused. Estella paused a moment in her knitting with her eyes upon me.

"Miss Havisham," said I, "I went to Richmond yesterday to speak to Estella; and finding that some wind had blown *her* here, I followed. What I had to say to Estella, Miss Havisham, I will say before you presently—in a few moments. It will not surprise you; it will not displease you. I am as unhappy as you can ever have meant me to be."

Miss Havisham continued to look steadily at me. I could see in the action of Estella's fingers as they worked that she attended to what I said, but she did not look up.

"I have found out who my patron is. It is not a fortunate discovery, and is not likely ever to enrich me in reputation, station, fortune, anything. There are reasons why I must say no more of that. It is not my secret, but another's. When you first caused me to be brought here, Miss Havisham; when I belonged to the village over yonder, that I wish I had never left; I suppose I did really come here, as any other chance boy might have come—as a kind of servant, to gratify a want or a whim, and to be paid for it?"

"Aye, Pip," replied Miss Havisham, steadily nodding her head, "you did."

"And that Mr. Jaggers—"

"Mr. Jaggers," said Miss Havisham, taking me up in a firm tone, "had nothing to do with it, and knew nothing of it. His being my law-

yer, and his being the lawyer of your patron is a coincidence."

"But when I fell into the mistake I have so long remained in, at least you led me on?" said I.

"Yes," she returned, again nodding steadily, "I let you go on."

"Was that kind?"

"Who am I," cried Miss Havisham, striking her stick upon the floor and flashing into wrath so suddenly that Estella glanced up at her in surprise, "who am I that I should be kind?"

"I was liberally paid for my old attendance here," I said, to soothe her, "in being apprenticed, and I have asked these questions only for my own information. What follows has another purpose. In humoring my mistake, Miss Havisham, you punished your self-seeking relations?"

"I did. Why, they would have it so! So would you. You made your own snares. *I* never made them."

12 Waiting until she was quiet again—for this, too, flashed out of her in a wild and sudden way—I went on.

"I have been thrown among one family of your relations, Miss Havisham, since I went to London. And I should be false and base if I did not tell you that you deeply wrong both Mr. Matthew Pocket and his son Herbert, if you suppose them to be otherwise than generous, upright, open, and incapable of anything designing or mean."

13 "They are your friends," said Miss Havisham.

"They made themselves my friends," said I, "when Sarah Pocket, Miss Georgiana, and Mistress Camilla were not my friends, I think."

This contrasting of them with the rest seemed, I was glad to see, to do them good with her. She looked at me keenly for a little while, and then said quietly:



"What do you want for them?"

14 "I do want something, Miss Havisham. If you could spare the money to do my friend Herbert a lasting service in life, but which from the nature of the case must be done without his knowledge, I could show you how."

"Why must it be done without his knowledge?" she asked, settling her hands upon her stick that she might regard me the more attentively.

"Because," said I, "I began the service myself, more than two years ago, without his knowledge, and I don't want to be betrayed. Why I fail in my ability to finish it, I cannot explain. It is a part of the secret which is another person's and not mine."

"What else?"

15 "Estella," said I, turning to her now, and trying to command my trembling voice, "you know I love you. You know that I have loved you long and dearly."

She raised her eyes to my face on being thus addressed, and her fingers plied their work, and she looked at me with an unmoved countenance. I saw that Miss Havisham glanced from me to her, and from her to me.

16 "I should have said this sooner, but for my long mistake. It induced me to hope that Miss Havisham meant us for one another. But I must say it now."

Preserving her unmoved countenance, and with her fingers still going, Estella shook her head.

"I know," said I, in answer to that action; "I know. I have no hope that I shall ever call you mine, Estella. I am ignorant what may become of me very soon, how poor I may be, or where I may go. Still, I love you. I have loved you ever since I first saw you in this house."

Looking at me perfectly unmoved and with her fingers busy, she shook her head again.

"It would have been cruel in Miss Havisham to torture me through all these years with a

vain hope and an idle pursuit, if she had reflected on the gravity of what she did. But I think she did not. I think that in the endurance of her own trial, she forgot mine, Estella."

I saw Miss Havisham put her hand to her heart and hold it there, as she sat looking by turns at Estella and at me.

"It seems," said Estella very calmly, "that there are sentiments, fancies—I don't know how to call them—which I am not able to comprehend. When you say you love me, I know what you mean, as a form of words, but nothing more. You address nothing in my breast, you touch nothing there."

"Is it not true," said I, "that Bentley Drummle is in town here, and pursuing you?"

"It is quite true," she replied, referring to him with the indifference of utter contempt.

"That you encourage him, and ride out with him, and that he dines with you this very day?"

She seemed a little surprised that I should know it, but again replied, "Quite true."

17 "You cannot love him, Estella?"

Her fingers stopped for the first time, as she retorted rather angrily, "What have I told you? Do you still think, in spite of it, that I do not mean what I say?"

"You would never marry him, Estella?"

She looked toward Miss Havisham. Then she said, "Why not tell you the truth? I am going to be married to him."

I dropped my face into my hands, but was able to control myself better than I could have expected, considering what agony it gave me to hear her say those words.

18 "Estella, dearest, dearest Estella, do not let Miss Havisham lead you into this fatal step. Put me aside forever—you have done so, I well know—but bestow yourself on some worthier person than Drummle. Miss Havisham gives you to him, as the greatest slight and injury that could be done to the many far better men

14

**Characterization.** Pip shows that he has acquired the altruistic nature that Magwitch always believed he had.

15

**First open declaration of love by Pip.**

16

**What does Pip mean by "long mistake"?** Responses will vary. His belief about the identity of his benefactor; his immature, unreal "expectations." Implies radical change in Pip's perspective.

17

**What is the tone of Pip's question?** Pip is protesting; he questions her reasons for involvement with Drummle.

18

Even though he has no chance of gaining Estella now, Pip shows selfless love by caring for her anyway.

19

**Characterization.** The same spirit that enables people to love gives life its "charm." Even though she is loved, Estella's life "has very few charms" because she is heartless.

20

Evidence of a Dickensian theme: individuals' characters are composed of good and evil. Comment shows Pip's recognition of complexity of human condition and his growing understanding of life's realities.

21

**What good and what harm has Estella done Pip?** Responses will vary. She has done good in sense that she inspired him to be a gentleman; harm in sense she has broken his heart. Pip's quest for her causes him to turn his back on those who truly love him.

22

Description of ghostlike figure holding her heart reinforces reader's connection of Arthur's vision with Miss Havisham.

23

**Suspense.** Short, cryptic note creates tension and desire to know what sort of danger Pip faces.

who admire you, and to the few who truly love you. Among those few, there may be one who loves you even as dearly, though he has not loved you as long, as I. Take him, and I can bear it better for your sake!"

My earnestness awoke a wonder in her.

"I am going," she said again, in a gentler voice, "to be married to him. The preparations for my marriage are making, and I shall be married soon. Why do you injuriously introduce the name of my mother by adoption? It is my own act."

"Your own act, Estella, to fling yourself away upon a brute?"

"On whom should I fling myself away?" she retorted, with a smile. "Should I fling myself away upon the man who would the soonest feel that I took nothing to him? I shall do well enough, and so will my husband. As to leading me into what you call this fatal step, Miss Havisham would have had me wait, and not marry yet; but I am tired of the life I have led, which has very few charms for me, and I am willing enough to change it. Say no more. We shall never understand each other."

"Such a mean brute, such a stupid brute!" I urged in despair.

"Don't be afraid of my being a blessing to him," said Estella. "I shall not be that. Come! Here is my hand."

"Oh, Estella!" I answered, as my bitter tears fell fast on her hand, do what I would to restrain them. "Even if I remained in England and could hold my head up with the rest, how could I see you Drummle's wife?"

"Nonsense," she returned, "nonsense. This will pass in no time."

"Never, Estella!"

"You will get me out of your thoughts in a week."

"Out of my thoughts! You are part of my existence, part of myself. You have been in every line I have ever read, since I first came here,

the rough common boy whose poor heart you wounded even then. Estella, to the last hour of my life, you cannot choose but remain part of my character, part of the little good in me, part of the evil. But I associate you only with the good, for you must have done me far more good than harm. Oh, God bless you, God forgive you!"

I held her hand to my lips some lingering moments, and so I left her. But ever afterward, I remembered that the spectral figure of Miss Havisham, her hand still covering her heart, seemed all resolved into a ghastly stare of pity and remorse.

It was past midnight when I crossed London Bridge: I was not expected till tomorrow, but I had my keys, and, if Herbert were gone to bed, could get to bed myself without disturbing him.

The night porter examined me with much attention as he held the gate a little way open for me to pass in. To help his memory I mentioned my name.

"I was not quite sure, sir, but I thought so. Here's a note, sir. The messenger that brought it said would you be so good as to read it by my lantern?"

Much surprised by the request, I took the note. It was directed to Philip Pip, Esquire, and on the top of the superscription were the words, "PLEASE READ THIS HERE." I opened it, the watchman holding up his light, and read inside, in Wemmick's writing:

"DON'T GO HOME."

## Chapter 33

*Pip meets Clara, Herbert's fiancée.*

Turning from the Temple gate as soon as I had read the warning, I made the best of the way to Fleet Street, and there got a late hackney char-

iot<sup>1</sup> and drove to the Hummums in Covent Garden. In those times a bed was always to be got there at any hour of the night, and the chamberlain, letting me in at his ready wicket, lighted the candle next in order on his shelf, and showed me straight into the bedroom next on his list.

1 What a doleful night! How anxious, how dismal, how long! The closet whispered, the fireplace sighed, the little washing-stand ticked, and one guitar string played occasionally in the chest of drawers. Why I was not to go home, and what had happened at home, and when I should go home, and whether Provis was safe at home, were questions occupying my mind so busily that one might have supposed there could be no more room in it for any other theme. Even when I thought of Estella, and how we had parted that day forever, I was pursuing here and there and everywhere the caution DON'T GO HOME. At last I dozed, in sheer exhaustion of mind and body.

I had left directions that I was to be called at seven; for it was plain that I must see Wemmick before seeing anyone else, and equally plain that this was a case in which his Walworth sentiments only could be taken.

The Castle battlements arose upon my view at eight o'clock. The little servant happening to be entering the fortress with two hot rolls, I crossed the drawbridge in her company and so came without announcement into the presence of Wemmick as he was making tea for himself and the Aged.

"Halloa, Mr. Pip!" said Wemmick. "You did come home, then?"

"Yes," I returned, "but I didn't go home."

"That's all right," said he, rubbing his hands. "I left a note for you at each of the Temple gates, on the chance. Which gate did you come to?"

I told him.

"I'll go round to the others in the course of the day and destroy the notes," said Wemmick. "It's a good rule never to leave documentary 2 evidence if you can help it. Now, Mr. Pip, you and I understand one another. I accidentally 3 heard, yesterday morning, that a certain person not altogether of uncolonial pursuits, and not unpossessed of portable property—we won't name this person—"

"Not necessary," said I.

"—had made some little stir in a certain part of the world where a good many people go, not always in gratification of their own inclination, by disappearing from such place and being no more heard of thereabouts. I also have heard that you at your chambers in Garden Court, Temple had been watched, and might be watched again."

"By whom?" said I.

"I wouldn't go into that," said Wemmick evasively. "It might clash with official responsibilities. I heard it."

As I saw that he was restrained by fealty to Little Britain from saying as much as he could, I could not press him. But I told him, after a little meditation over the fire, that I would like to ask him a question, subject to his answering or not answering, as he deemed right.

5 "You have heard of a man of bad character, whose true name is Compeyson?"

He answered with one nod.

"Is he living?"

One other nod.

"Is he in London?"

He gave me one last nod and went on with his breakfast.

"Now," said Wemmick, "questioning being over," which he emphasized and repeated for my guidance; "I come to what I did, after hearing what I heard. I went to Garden Court to find you; not finding you, I went to Clarriker's to find Mr. Herbert."

## Chapter 33

1 **Imagery.** The noises Pip hears in the furniture reflect and emphasize Pip's exhaustion and inner turmoil. Precise, vivid, and concrete images simultaneously depict **setting**, **atmosphere**, and inner feelings of character.

2 Wemmick's plan to destroy notes creates atmosphere of mystery and **suspense**, expectation of approaching **climax**.

3 Translated, this means "person of colonial pursuits possessed of portable property (money)" —undoubtedly Provis.

4 **Why is Wemmick so evasive during this conversation?** He is being careful not to mix his professional behavior with his Walworth behavior. Also, gravity of topic requires secrecy.

5 Passage is humorous because Wemmick, despite his indirectness (nods instead of words), is answering Pip's questions.

1. **hackney chariot:** a horse-drawn cab.



**6** *Who is "Tom, Jack, or Richard"?* Magwitch. Wemmick's sense of secrecy and propriety leads him to refer to Magwitch in indirect terms.

**7** *Characterization.* Evasiveness of Wemmick's advice shows conflict between his Walworth and Little Britain "selves"; one side wants to warn Pip, and other does not, so he is forced to warn Pip in way not sounding like warning.

**8** Plan Wemmick helps design is key element of major **climax** of novel.

**9** Another reference to nine o'clock. Dickens' use of time interesting. Miss Havisham's clocks stopped at twenty of nine; Wemmick fires gun at nine o'clock; Magwitch housed at nine o'clock. Later, escape plans contingent on tide, which goes out at nine o'clock. Might be inferred that this time is associated with important, climactic moments in story.

"And him you found?" said I, with great anxiety.

"And I found him. Without mentioning any names or going into any details, I gave him to understand that if he was aware of anybody—  
**6** Tom, Jack, or Richard—being about the chambers, or about the immediate neighborhood, he had better get Tom, Jack, or Richard out of the way while you were out of the way."

"He would be greatly puzzled what to do?"

"He *was* puzzled what to do; not the less because I gave him my opinion that it was not safe to try to get Tom, Jack, or Richard too far  
**7** out of the way at present. Mr. Pip, I'll tell you something. Under existing circumstances there is no place like a great city when you are once in it. Don't break cover too soon. Lie close. Wait till things slacken before you try the open, even for foreign air."

I thanked him for his valuable advice, and asked him what Herbert had done.

"Mr. Herbert," said Wemmick, "after being all of a heap for half an hour, struck out a plan. He mentioned to me as a secret that he is courting a young lady who has, as no doubt you are aware, a bedridden pa. Which pa, having been in the purser line of life, lies a-bed in a bow window where he can see the ships sail up and down the river. You are acquainted with the young lady, most probably?"

"Not personally," said I.

**8** "The house with the bow window," said Wemmick, "being kept, it seems, by a very respectable widow, who has a furnished upper floor to let, Mr. Herbert put it to me, what did I think of that as a temporary tenement for Tom, Jack, or Richard? Now, I thought very well of it, for three reasons. Firstly. It is well away from the usual heap of streets. Secondly. Without going near it yourself, you could always hear of the safety of Tom, Jack, or Richard, through Mr. Herbert. Thirdly. After a while, and when it might be prudent, if you

should want to slip Tom, Jack, or Richard on board a foreign packet boat,<sup>2</sup> there he is—ready."

Much comforted by these considerations, I thanked Wemmick again and again, and begged him to proceed.

"Well, sir! Mr. Herbert threw himself into the business with a will, and by nine o'clock last night he housed Tom, Jack, or Richard—whichever it may be—you and I don't want to know—quite successfully. At the old lodgings it was understood that he was summoned to Dover. Now, another advantage of all this is that it was done without you. This diverts suspicion and confuses it, and you want confusion."

Wemmick, having finished his breakfast, here looked at his watch, and began to get his coat on.

"And now, Mr. Pip," said he, with his hands still in the sleeves, "I have probably done the most I can do. Here's the address. There can be no harm in your going here tonight and seeing for yourself that all is well with Tom, Jack, or Richard, before you go home. I must be off. If you had nothing more pressing to do than to keep here till dark that's what I should advise."

I soon fell asleep before Wemmick's fire, and the Aged and I enjoyed one another's society by falling asleep before it more or less all day. Eight o'clock had struck before I got into the air that was scented, not disagreeably, by the chips and shavings of the longshore boat-builders, and mast, oar, and blockmakers. All that waterside region of the upper and lower Pool below London Bridge was unknown ground to me, and when I struck down by the river, I found that the spot I wanted was anything but easy to find. It was called Mill Pond

**2. packet boat:** a steamship that carries mail, freight, and passengers along a regular route, in this case, from England to the Continent.

Bank, Chinks's Basin; and I had no other guide to Chinks's Basin than the Old Green Copper Rope-Walk.

Selecting from the few queer houses upon Mill Pond Bank a house with a wooden front and three stories of bow window, I looked at the plate upon the door, and read there Mrs. Whimple. That being the name I wanted, I knocked, and an elderly woman of a pleasant and thriving appearance responded. She was immediately deposed, however, by Herbert, who silently led me into the parlor and shut the door.

"All is well, Handel," said Herbert, "and he is quite satisfied, though eager to see you. My dear girl is with her father, and if you'll wait till she comes down, I'll make you known to her, and then we'll go upstairs.—*That's* her father."

**10** I had become aware of an alarming growling overhead, and had probably expressed the fact in my countenance.

"I am afraid he is a sad old rascal," said Herbert, smiling, "but I have never seen him. Don't you smell rum? He is always at it." While he thus spoke, the growling noise became a prolonged roar, and died away.

"To have Provis for an upper lodger is quite a godsend to Mrs. Whimple," said Herbert, "for of course people in general won't stand that noise."

**11** As we were thus conversing, a very pretty, slight, dark-eyed girl of twenty or so came in with a basket in her hand, whom Herbert tenderly relieved of the basket, and presented, blushing, as "Clara." There was something confiding, loving, and innocent in her modest manner of yielding herself to Herbert's embracing arm. I was looking at her with pleasure and admiration when suddenly the growl swelled into a roar again, and a frightful bumping noise was heard above, as if a giant with a wooden leg were trying to bore it

through the ceiling to come at us. Upon this, Clara said to Herbert, "Papa wants me, darling!" and ran away.

Clara returned soon afterward, and Herbert accompanied me upstairs to see our charge. I **12** found Provis comfortably settled. He expressed no alarm, and seemed to feel none that was worth mentioning; but it struck me that he was softened—indefinably, for I could not have said how.

The opportunity that the day's rest had given me for reflection had resulted in my fully determining to say nothing to him respecting Compeyson. For anything I knew, his animosity toward the man might otherwise lead to his seeking him out and rushing on his own destruction. Therefore, when Herbert and I sat down with him by his fire, I asked him first of all whether he relied on Wemmick's judgment and sources of information.

"Aye, aye, dear boy!" he answered with a grave nod. "Jaggers knows."

"Then I have talked with Wemmick," said I, "and have come to tell you what caution he gave me and what advice."

I told him how Wemmick had heard in Newgate Prison that he was under some suspicion, and that my chambers had been watched; how Wemmick had recommended his keeping close for a time, and my keeping away from him; and what Wemmick had said about getting him abroad. I added that of course I should go with him. What was to follow that, I did not touch **13** upon; neither indeed was I at all clear or comfortable about it in my own mind, now that I saw him in that softer condition, and in declared peril for my sake.

He was very reasonable throughout. His coming back was a venture, he said, and he had always known it to be a venture, and he had very little fear of his safety with such good **14** help.

Herbert, who had been looking at the fire

#### **10**

Contrast of seriousness of situation and description of noises father makes creates comical tone. Story is dotted with humorous eccentrics like Clara's father.

#### **11**

Foil. Warm, innocent, devoted Clara contrasts with hard-hearted, proud, distant Estella; highlights differences between lives of men who love them—Herbert and Pip, respectively.

#### **12**

Characterization. Provis has undergone a major change, but reader is kept in suspense as to its exact nature.

#### **13**

Pip implies that he is unsure of what will happen after escape; his discomfort with thought anticipates failure of escape.

#### **14**

*What are differences between the way Provis actually is and the way Pip thinks he is?* Responses will vary. Pip thinks Provis is foolhardy and dangerously childlike; actually, Provis is "very reasonable." He understands danger of his "venture," and this understanding is precisely what makes it impressive.

15

**Suspense.** Air of intrigue heightens tension.

16

**Why, after his initial repulsion, is Pip warming up to Provis?** Responses will vary. Shared experience, especially intense experience, tends to create bond between people. Pip's knowledge of danger of Provis' presence has probably given birth to genuine sympathy.

17

Pip's language here reflects his change in attitude towards Magwitch.

## Chapter 34

1

**Foreshadowing.** Foreshadows Pip's later financial problems.

and pondering, here said, "We are both good watermen, Handel, and could take him down the river ourselves when the right time comes. No boat would then be hired for the purpose, and no boatmen; that would save at least a chance of suspicion, and any chance is worth saving. Don't you think it might be a good thing if you began at once to keep a boat at the Temple stairs, and were in the habit of rowing up and down the river? You fall into that habit, and then who notices or minds? Do it twenty or fifty times, and there is nothing special in your doing it the twenty-first or fifty-first."

15 I liked this scheme, and Provis was quite elated by it. We agreed that it should be carried into execution, and that Provis should never recognize us if we came below Bridge and rowed past Mill Pond Bank. But we further agreed that he should pull down the blind in that part of his window which faced upon the east whenever he saw us and all was right.

Our conference being now ended, and everything arranged, I rose to go, remarking to Herbert that he and I had better not go home together, and that I would take half an hour's start of him. "I don't like to leave you here," I said to Provis, "though I cannot doubt your being safer here than near me. Good-bye!"

"Dear boy," he answered, clasping my hands, "I don't know when we may meet again, and I don't like goodbye. Say good night!"

"Good night! Herbert will go regularly between us, and when the time comes, you may be certain I shall be ready. Good night, good night!" Looking back at him, I thought of the first night of his return, when our positions were reversed, and when I little supposed my heart could ever be as heavy and anxious at parting from him as it was now.

Next day, I set myself to get the boat. It was soon done, and the boat was brought round to the Temple stairs, and lay where I could reach

her within a minute or two. Then I began to go out as for training and practice, sometimes alone, sometimes with Herbert. I was often out in cold, rain, and sleet, but nobody took much note of me after I had been out a few times. At first, I kept above Blackfriars Bridge; but as the hours of the tide changed, I took toward London Bridge. The first time I passed Mill Pond Bank, Herbert and I were pulling a pair of oars; and, both in going and returning, we saw the blind toward the east come down. Herbert was rarely there less frequently than three times in a week, and he never brought me a single word of intelligence that was at all alarming.

17 Still, I was always full of fears for the rash man who was in hiding. Herbert had sometimes said to me that he found it pleasant to stand at one of our windows after dark, when the tide was running down, and to think that it was flowing, with everything it bore, toward Clara. But I thought with dread that it was flowing toward Magwitch, and that any black mark on its surface might be his pursuers, going swiftly, silently, and surely to take him.

## Chapter 34

*Wemmick tells Pip the story of Molly.*

Some weeks passed without bringing any change. We waited for Wemmick, and he made no sign. My worldly affairs began to wear a gloomy appearance, and I was pressed for money by more than one creditor. Even I myself began to know the want of ready money in my own pocket, and to relieve it by converting some easily spared articles of jewelry into cash. But I had quite determined that it would be a heartless fraud to take more money from my



patron in the existing state of my uncertain thoughts and plans. Therefore, I had sent him the unopened pocketbook by Herbert, to hold in his own keeping, and I felt a kind of satisfaction in not having profited by his generosity since his revelation of himself.

It was an unhappy life that I lived. Condemned to inaction and a state of constant restlessness and suspense, I rowed about in my boat, and waited, waited, waited, as I best could.

One afternoon, late in February, I came ashore at the wharf at dusk. I had pulled down as far as Greenwich with the ebb tide and had turned with the tide. It had been a fine bright day, but had become foggy as the sun dropped, and I had had to feel my way back among the shipping pretty carefully. Both in going and returning, I had had seen the signal in his window, all well.

I had strolled up into Cheapside when a large hand was laid upon my shoulder, by someone overtaking me. It was Mr. Jaggers' hand, and he passed it through my arm.

"As we are going in the same direction, Pip, we may walk together. Come and dine with me."

I was going to excuse myself, when he added, "Wemmick's coming." So I changed my excuse into an acceptance.

We went to Gerrard Street, all three together, and as soon as we got there, dinner was served.

"Did you send that note of Miss Havisham's to Mr. Pip, Wemmick?" Mr. Jaggers asked, soon after we began dinner.

"No, sir," returned Wemmick; "it was going by post, when you brought Mr. Pip into the office. Here it is." He handed it to his principal, instead of to me.

"It's a note of two lines, Pip," said Mr. Jaggers, handing it on, "sent up to me by Miss Havisham, on account of her not being sure of

your address. She tells me that she wants to see you on a little matter of business you mentioned to her. You'll go down?"

"Yes," said I, casting my eyes on the note, which was exactly in those terms.

"When do you think of going down?"

"I have an impending engagement," said I, glancing at Wemmick, "that renders me rather uncertain of my time. At once, I think."

"If Mr. Pip has the intention of going at once," said Wemmick to Mr. Jaggers, "he needn't write an answer, you know."

Receiving this as an intimation that it was best not to delay, I settled that I would go tomorrow, and said so. Wemmick drank a glass of wine and looked with a grimly satisfied air at Mr. Jaggers, but not at me.

"So, Pip! Our friend the Spider," said Mr. Jaggers, "has played his cards. He has won the pool."

It was as much as I could do to assent.

"So, here's to Mrs. Bentley Drummle," said Mr. Jaggers, taking a decanter of choicer wine from his dumbwaiter, and filling for each of us and for himself. "Now, Molly, Molly, Molly, how slow you are today!"

She was at his elbow when he addressed her, putting a dish upon the table. As she withdrew her hands from it, she fell back a step or two, nervously muttering some excuse. And a certain action of her fingers as she spoke arrested my attention.

"What's the matter?" said Mr. Jaggers.

"Nothing. Only the subject we were speaking of," said I, "was rather painful to me."

The action of her fingers was like the action of knitting. She stood looking at her master, not understanding whether she was free to go, or whether he had more to say to her and would call her back if she did go. Her look was very intent. Surely, I had seen exactly such eyes and such hands on a memorable occasion very lately!

2 Since Magwitch and his money are eventually lost, Pip's satisfaction may be foolish and wasteful.

3 Repetition of word *waited* underscores sensation of anticipation.

4 **Foreshadowing.** Weather foreshadows Pip's coming encounter. Pip's spirits, too, "become foggy" as the sun drops and he encounters Jaggers.

5 Jaggers, though he pretends to have come upon Pip accidentally, was obviously lying in wait for him.

6 **What does Miss Havisham want to discuss with Pip?** She wants to talk to Pip about his proposal that she help Herbert.

7 **What does Jaggers mean by the Spider "has played his cards"?** Drummle has married Estella.

8

That Molly is Estella's mother entangles subplot of Magwitch and Jagers with subplot of Miss Havisham and Estella.

9

**Foreshadowing.** Wemmick's "rather sly" look intimates some special plan—indeed, foreshadows their approaching marriage.

10

*Why does Wemmick think that Molly's possible gypsy heritage has anything to do with her violent actions?* Wemmick voices common—but bigoted—belief that gypsies are naturally hot-blooded and violent.

11

Although Wemmick makes no direct statement of it, implication is that Molly murdered woman and was acquitted only by good luck and Jagers' skill.

12

Jagers' cruel treatment of Molly during dinner party scene (p. 742) takes on new significance. He had forced her to show her strong wrists, which could have enabled her to strangle someone.

He dismissed her, and she glided out of the room. But she remained before me, as plainly

8 as if she were still there. I looked at those 11 hands, I looked at those eyes, I looked at that flowing hair; and I compared them with other hands, other eyes, other hair, that I knew of, and with what those might be after twenty years of a brutal husband and a stormy life. I looked again at those hands and eyes of the housekeeper. And I felt absolutely certain that this woman was Estella's mother. Only twice more did the housekeeper reappear, and then her stay in the room was very short, and Mr. Jagers was sharp with her. But her hands were Estella's hands, and her eyes were Estella's eyes, and if she had reappeared a hundred times I could have been neither more sure nor less sure that my conviction was the truth.

Wemmick and I took our leave early, and left together. I asked him if he had ever seen Miss Havisham's adopted daughter, Mrs. Bentley Drummle? He said no. To avoid being too abrupt, I then spoke of the Aged, and of Miss 9 Skiffins. He looked rather sly when I mentioned Miss Skiffins.

"Wemmick," said I, "do you remember telling me, before I first went to Mr. Jagers' pri- 12 vate house, to notice that housekeeper?"

"Did I?" he replied. "Ah, I dare say I did."

"I wish you would tell me her story. I feel a particular interest in being acquainted with it. You know that what is said between you and me goes no further."

"Well!" Wemmick replied. "I don't know her story—that is, I don't know all of it. But what I do know, I'll tell you. We are in our private and personal capacities, of course."

"Of course."

"A score or so of years ago that woman was tried at the Old Bailey for murder and was acquitted. She was a very handsome young 10 woman, and I believe had some gypsy blood in

her. Anyhow, it was hot enough when it was up, as you may suppose."

"But she was acquitted."

"Mr. Jagers was for her," pursued Wemmick, with a look full of meaning, "and worked the case in a way quite astonishing. It was a desperate case. The murdered person was a woman, a good ten years older, very much larger, and very much stronger. It was a case of jealousy. They both led tramping lives, and this woman in Gerrard Street here had been married very young to a tramping man, and was a perfect fury in point of jealousy. The murdered woman—more a match for the man, certainly, in point of years—was found dead in a barn. There had been a violent struggle, perhaps a fight. She was bruised and scratched and torn, and had been held by the throat at last and choked. Now, there was no reasonable evidence to implicate any person but this woman, and on the physical improbabilities of her having been able to do it, Mr. Jagers principally rested his case. You may be sure," said Wemmick, touching me on the sleeve, "that he never dwelt upon the strength of her hands then, though he sometimes does now."

I had told Wemmick of his showing us her wrists that day at the dinner party.

"Well, sir!" Wemmick went on. "This woman was so artfully dressed from the time of her apprehension that she looked much slier than she really was; her sleeves are always remembered to have been so skillfully contrived that her arms had a delicate look. But the backs of her hands were lacerated, and the question was, was it with fingernails? Now, Mr. Jagers showed that she had struggled through a great lot of brambles which she could not have got through and kept her hands out of; and bits of those brambles were actually found in her skin and put in evidence. But the boldest point he made was this. It was attempted to be set up in

## READING SKILLS PRACTICE

The underlined passage can be used to give students practice in the reading skill of identifying words with academic and practical applications. Ask students to read the passage and to identify the correct definition of the word *hypothesis*

(used twice in the passage). A. Undeniable truth. (Incorrect.) B. Formal accusation or indictment in a court of law. (Incorrect.) C. Falsehood under oath. (Incorrect. Answers A, B, and C are plausible in that they fit both syntactically and seman-

tically into the sentences containing *hypothesis*. They are not, however, correct definitions of the term.) D. Assertion to be tested for validity or reasonableness. (Correct. This is an accurate definition of *hypothesis*.)

proof of her jealousy that she was under strong suspicion of having, at about the time of the murder, frantically destroyed her child by this man—some three years old—to revenge herself upon him. Mr. Jaggers worked that in this way. ‘We say these are not marks of fingernails, but marks of brambles, and we show you the brambles. You say they are marks of fingernails, and you set up the hypothesis that she destroyed her child. You must accept all consequences of that hypothesis. For anything we know, she may have destroyed her child, and the child in clinging to her may have scratched her hands. What then? You are not trying her for the murder of her child; why don’t you? As to this case, if you *will* have scratches, we say that, for anything we know, you may have accounted for them, assuming for the sake of argument that you have not invented them.’ To sum up, sir,” added Wemmick, “Mr. Jaggers was altogether too many for the jury, and they gave in.”

“Has she been in his service ever since?”

“Yes,” said Wemmick, “she went into his service immediately after her acquittal, tamed as she is now.”

“Do you remember the sex of the child?”

“Said to have been a girl.”

“You have nothing more to say to me tonight?”

“Nothing.”

We exchanged a cordial good night, and  
13 went home, with new matter for my thoughts, though with no relief from the old.

## Chapter 35

*Pip visits Miss Havisham for the last time.*

Putting Miss Havisham’s note in my pocket, I went down by coach next day. The best light of

▶ Reading Skills Objective: Identifying Words with Academic and Practical Applications

the day had gone when I passed the High Street. The cathedral chimes had at once a sadder and more remote sound to me; they seemed to call to me that the place was changed, and that Estella was gone out of it forever.

Miss Havisham was not in her own room, but was in the larger room across the landing.

2 Looking in at the door, after knocking in vain, I saw her sitting on the hearth in a ragged chair, close before the ash fire. I went in and stood where she could see me when she raised her eyes. There was an air of utter loneliness upon her. As I stood compassionating her,<sup>1</sup> and thinking how in the progress of time I too had come to be a part of the wrecked fortunes of that house, her eyes rested on me. She  
3 stared and said in a low voice, “Is it real?”

“It is I, Pip. Mr. Jaggers gave me your note yesterday, and I have lost no time.”

“Thank you. Thank you.”

“I want,” she said, “to pursue that subject you mentioned to me when you were last here, and to show you that I am not all stone. You

4 said, speaking for your friend, that you could tell me how to do something useful and good. Something that you would like done, is it not?”

“Something that I would like done very, very much.”

“What is it?”

I began explaining to her that secret history of the partnership. I told her how I had hoped to complete the transaction out of my means, but how in this I was disappointed.

“So!” said she, assenting with her head, but not looking at me. “And how much money is wanting to complete the purchase?”

I was rather afraid of stating it, for it sounded a large sum. “Nine hundred pounds.”

1. **compassionating her:** sympathizing deeply with her; being compassionate.

13

*What is the “new matter” that Pip has to think about? Speculates that Estella is daughter of Molly and Magwitch.*

## Chapter 35

1

**Setting.** Sound of bells at twilight suggests completion or death.

2

**Characterization.** Lonely and isolated, Miss Havisham sits, neglected by others as she has neglected the fire and her house.

3

*What does Miss Havisham mean by her cryptic question, “Is it real?”* Responses will vary. In her pain, she, like her half-brother Arthur, has probably succumbed to hallucinations. She may wonder if Pip is really there.

4

Miss Havisham probably knows she is in decline and, like Scrooge, another Dickens character, wants to set things right if she can.



5

First time Miss Havisham has shown any real compassion towards Pip.

6

*How are the question and the question's tone separate things?* Question itself asks Pip if she can help him; its tone is kind. Miss Havisham could offer Pip help without kindness, as when she arranged his apprenticeship.

7

Pip wants forgiveness for wrongs committed during his quest for expectations, such as criticisms of Joe, misdirected love, and belief in illusions.

8

*What has Miss Havisham done? What might be inferred from the tone of her question?* She has brought Estella up to be coldhearted and vengeful, thereby jeopardizing her happiness; she has hurt Pip by using him in her game of revenge. Her despair indicates that she regrets her wasted life, her negative influence on Estella, her role in hurting Pip.

9

**Symbol.** Throughout story, Satis symbolizes attitudes and actions of characters. Here, atmosphere of house reflects Miss Havisham's loss of Estella.

10

Miss Havisham, accustomed to living in the past, now seems in danger of dwelling on her errors rather than attempting to correct them.

"If I give you the money for this purpose, will you keep my secret as you have kept your own?"

"Quite as faithfully."

"And your mind will be more at rest?"

"Much more at rest."

5 "Are you very unhappy now?"

"I am far from happy, Miss Havisham; but I have other causes of disquiet than any you know of. They are the secrets I have mentioned."

After a little while, she raised her head and looked at the fire again.

"Can I only serve you, Pip, by serving your friend? Regarding that as done, is there nothing I can do for you yourself?"

6 "Nothing. I thank you for the question. I thank you even more for the tone of the question. But, there is nothing."

She presently rose from her seat and looked about for the means of writing. There were none there, and she took from her pocket a yellow set of ivory tablets, mounted in tarnished gold, and wrote upon them with a pencil in a case of tarnished gold that hung from her neck.

"You are still on friendly terms with Mr. Jaggers?"

"Quite. I dined with him yesterday."

"This is an authority to him to pay you that money, to lay out at your discretion for your friend. I keep no money here; but if you would rather Mr. Jaggers knew nothing of the matter, I will send it to you."

"Thank you, Miss Havisham; I have not the least objection to receiving it from him."

She read me what she had written, and it was 10 direct and clear, and evidently intended to absolve me from any suspicion of profiting by the receipt of the money. I took the tablets from her hand and it trembled as she took off the chain to which the pencil was attached, and put it in mine.

"My name is on the first leaf. If you can ever write under my name, 'I forgive her,' though ever so long after my broken heart is dust—pray do it!"

7 "Oh, Miss Havisham," said I, "I can do it now. I want forgiveness and direction far too much to be bitter with you."

She turned her face to me for the first time since she had averted it, and to my amazement, I may even add to my terror, dropped on her knees at my feet with her folded hands raised. To see her with her white hair and her worn face, kneeling at my feet, gave me a shock through all my frame.

8 "Oh!" she cried despairingly. "What have I done! What have I done!"

"If you mean, Miss Havisham, what have you done to injure me, let me answer. Very little. I should have loved her under any circumstances. Is she married?"

"Yes!"

9 It was a needless question, for a new desolation in the desolate house had told me so.

"What have I done! What have I done!" She wrung her hands, and crushed her white hair, and returned to this cry over and over again. "What have I done! Until you spoke to her the other day, and until I saw in you a looking glass that showed me what I once felt myself, I did not know what I had done. What have I done! What have I done!"

"Miss Havisham," I said, when her cry had died away, "you may dismiss me from your mind and conscience. But Estella is a different case, and if you can ever undo any scrap of what you have done amiss in keeping a part of her right nature away from her, it will be better to do that than to bemoan the past through a hundred years."

"Yes, yes, I know it. But, Pip—my dear!" There was an earnest womanly compassion for me in her new affection. "My dear! Believe this: when she first came to me, I meant to save

her from misery like my own. At first I meant no more. But as she grew, and promised to be very beautiful, I gradually did worse, and with my praises, and with my jewels, and with my

11 teachings, I stole her heart away and put ice in its place."

"Better," I could not help saying, "to have left her a natural heart, even to be bruised or broken."

"If you knew all my story," she pleaded, "you would have some compassion for me and a better understanding of me."

"Miss Havisham," I answered, as delicately as I could, "I believe I may say that I do know your story, and have known it ever since I first left this neighborhood. Does what has passed between us give me any excuse for asking you a question relative to Estella?"

She was seated on the ground, with her arms on the ragged chair, and her head leaning on them. She looked full at me and replied, "Go on."

12 "Whose child was Estella?"

She shook her head.

"You don't know?"

She shook her head again.

"But Mr. Jaggers brought her here, or sent her here?"

"Brought her here."

"Will you tell me how that came about?"

She answered in a low whisper and with caution, "I had been shut up in these rooms a long time when I told him that I wanted a little girl to rear and love, and save from my fate. He told me that he would look about him for such an orphan child. One night he brought her here asleep, and I called her Estella."

"Might I ask her age then?"

"Two or three. She herself knows nothing, but that she was left an orphan and I adopted

her."

So convinced I was of that woman's being her mother that I wanted no evidence to estab-

lish the fact in my mind. But, to any mind, the connection here was clear and straight.

What more could I hope to do by prolonging the interview? I had succeeded on behalf of Herbert, Miss Havisham had told me all she knew of Estella, I had said and done what I could to ease her mind.

Twilight was closing in when I went downstairs into the natural air. I called to the woman who had opened the gate when I entered that I would not trouble her just yet, but would walk round the place before leaving. For I had a presentiment that I should never be there again, and I felt that the dying light was suited to my last view of it.

I made my way to the ruined garden. I went all round it; round by the corner where Herbert and I had fought our battle; round by the paths where Estella and I had walked. So cold, so lonely, so dreary all!

Passing on into the front courtyard, I hesitated whether to call the woman to let me out at the locked gate, of which she had the key, or first to go upstairs and assure myself that Miss Havisham was as safe and well as I had left her. I took the latter course and went up.

I looked into the room where I had left her, and I saw her seated in the ragged chair upon the hearth close to the fire, with her back toward me. In the moment when I was withdrawing my head to go quietly away, I saw a great flaming light spring up. In the same moment I saw her running at me, shrieking, with a whirl of fire blazing all about her, and soaring at least as many feet about her head as she was high.

I had a double-caped greatcoat on, and over my arm another thick coat. I got them off, closed with her, threw her down, and got them over her; I dragged the great cloth from the table for the same purpose, and with it dragged down the heap of rottenness in the midst and all the ugly things that sheltered

11

**Metaphor.** Miss Havisham means that she raised Estella to be cold and hard instead of sensitive and loving.

12

**Why is Pip so curious about Estella's origins?** He wants to confirm his belief that Estella is Molly's daughter.

13

**Is the relationship between Molly and Estella obvious at this point?** Answers will vary. There is much circumstantial evidence, and the connection seems clear to Pip.

14

**Symbol.** Miss Havisham's years of bitterness, symbolized by dress and other articles, are destroyed by fire, which may symbolize her tumultuous guilt.

15

Destruction of rotted and vermin-infested cake symbolizes end of Miss Havisham's world of devastated illusions, emotional pain, and mean-spirited revenge.

### VISUAL CONNECTIONS

#### Ideas for Writing

Have students imagine themselves in Pip's situation. He has just learned a great deal about Miss Havisham and subsequently about himself. Ask students to write brief internal monologues, from Pip's point of view, revealing what Pip might have been thinking at these three times: as he left Miss Havisham's room, when he first noticed the flames, and when we see him here. The monologue should attempt to capture Pip's manner of speaking. Ask several students to read their monologues aloud in class.





16 there. The closer I covered her, the more wildly she shrieked and tried to free herself. I knew that we were on the floor by the great table, and that patches of tinder yet alight were floating in the smoky air, which a moment ago had been her faded bridal dress.

Then I looked round and saw the disturbed  
17 beetles and spiders running away over the floor, and the servants coming in with breathless cries at the door. She was insensible, and I was afraid to have her moved, or even touched. Assistance was sent for, and I held her until it came, as if I unreasonably fancied that if I let her go, the fire would break out again and consume her. When I got up, on the surgeon's coming to her with other aid, I was astonished to see that both my hands were burned; for I had no knowledge of it through the sense of feeling.

On examination it was pronounced that she had received serious hurts, but that the danger  
18 lay mainly in the nervous shock. By the surgeon's directions, her bed was carried into that room and laid upon the great table, which happened to be well suited to the dressing of her injuries. When I saw her again, an hour after-  
19 ward, she lay indeed where I had seen her strike her stick, and had heard her say she would lie one day.

Toward midnight she began to wander in her speech and said innumerable times, in a low solemn voice, "What have I done!" And then, "When she first came, I meant to save her from misery like mine." And then, "Take the pencil and write under my name, 'I forgive her!'" She never changed the order of these three sentences.

As I could do no service there, and as I had, nearer home, that pressing reason for anxiety and fear, I decided that I would return by the early morning coach. At about six o'clock of the morning, therefore, I leaned over her and touched her lips with mine, just as they said,

"Take the pencil and write under my name, 'I forgive her.'"

## Chapter 36

*Pip hears more about Provis.*

My hands had been dressed twice or thrice in the night, and again in the morning. My left arm was a good deal burned to the elbow, and less severely as high as the shoulder; it was very painful, but I felt thankful it was no worse. My right hand was not so badly burned but that I could move the fingers. My left hand and arm I carried in a sling; and I could only wear my coat like a cloak, loose over my shoulders and fastened at the neck.

Herbert devoted the day to attending on me. He was the kindest of nurses, and at stated times took off the bandages and steeped them in the cooling liquid that was kept ready, and put them on again, with a patient tenderness that I was deeply grateful for.

1 Neither of us spoke of the boat, but we thought of it. That was made apparent by our avoidance of the subject and by our agreeing—without agreement—to make my recovery of the use of my hands a question of so many hours, not of so many weeks.

My first question when I saw Herbert had been, of course, whether all was well down the river.

"I sat with Provis last night, Handel, two good hours. Do you know, Handel, he improves?"

"I said to you I thought he was softened when I last saw him."

"So you did. And so he is. He was very communicative last night, and told me more of his life. You remember his breaking off here about some woman that he had had great trou-

16 **Why is it significant that Miss Havisham is injured and her dress destroyed by flames?** Responses will vary. Most will agree that flames may symbolize both the "light" she has seen and the intensity of her emotion.

17 **Cake was so rotten that bugs were living in it.**

18 **Irony.** What was to be the centerpiece of wedding celebration became the focus of Miss Havisham's grief and now is the site of her physical suffering.

19 **This event reminds reader of the deathbed Miss Havisham announced earlier in story.**

## Chapter 36

1 **Suspense.** Urgency of recovering use of hands reminds reader that Pip's dangerous attempt to escape with Provis approaches.

**2**  
*Wild*: chaotic and disorderly.

**3**  
**Suspense.** Pip is excited because he thinks his theory about relationship of Molly, Magwitch, and Estella is about to be confirmed. Reader also wonders if Pip is right.

**4**  
*Why was Magwitch so concerned about Molly's welfare?* Responses will vary. Magwitch probably still cared about her despite believing she had killed their child.

**5**  
In protecting Molly, Magwitch lost her and child forever.

**6**  
Here, Pip puts together all elements of one subplot of novel.

ble with? He went into that part of his life, and  
**2** a dark wild part it is. Shall I tell you?"

"Tell me by all means!"

"It seems, that the woman was a young woman, and a jealous woman, and a revengeful woman; revengeful, Handel, to the last degree."

"To what last degree?"

"Murder! She was tried for it, and Mr. Jaggers defended her, and the reputation of that defense first made his name known to Provis. It was another and a stronger woman who was the victim, and there had been a struggle—in a barn."

"Was the woman brought in guilty?"

"No; she was acquitted. This acquitted young woman and Provis had a little child, a little child of whom Provis was exceedingly fond. On the evening of the very night when the object of her jealousy was strangled, the young woman presented herself before Provis for one moment, and swore that she would destroy the child (which was in her possession), and he should never see it again; then she vanished.  
**3** *ished. You don't think your breathing is affected, my dear boy? You seem to breathe quickly.*"

"Perhaps I do, Herbert. Did the woman keep her oath?"

"There comes the darkest part of Provis' life. She did."

"That is, he says she did."

"Why, of course, my dear boy," returned Herbert, in a tone of surprise, and again bending forward to get a nearer look at me. "He says it all. I have no other information."

"No, to be sure."

"Now, whether," pursued Herbert, "he had used the child's mother ill or well, Provis doesn't say; but she had shared some four or five years of the wretched life he described to  
**4** *us at this fireside, and he seems to have felt pity for her. Therefore, fearing he should be called*

upon to depose<sup>1</sup> about this destroyed child, and so be the cause of her death, he hid himself (much as he grieved for the child), kept himself dark, as he says, out of the way and out of the trial, and was only vaguely talked of as a certain man called Abel, out of whom the jealousy arose. After the acquittal she disappeared, and thus he lost the child and the child's mother."

"I want to ask——"

"A moment, my dear boy, and I have done. That evil genius, Compeyson, the worst of scoundrels, knowing of his keeping out of the way at that time, of course afterward held the knowledge over his head as a means of keeping him poorer and working him harder."

"I want to know," said I, "and particularly, Herbert, whether he told you when this happened?"

"Particularly? Let me remember, then, what he said as to that. His expression was, 'a round score o' year ago, and a'most directly after I took up wi' Compeyson.' How old were you when you came upon him in the little churchyard?"

"I think in my seventh year."

"Aye. It had happened some three or four years then, he said, and you brought into his mind the little girl so tragically lost, who would have been about your age."

**6** "Herbert," said I, after a short silence, "the man we have hiding down the river is Estella's father."

## Chapter 37

*Pip receives a mysterious letter.*

Early next morning I took my way to Little Britain. Although I had sent Mr. Jaggers a

1. **depose** (dī-pōz'): here used in the legal sense, to testify under oath.

brief account of the accident as soon as I had arrived in town, yet I had to give him all the details now. My narrative finished, I then produced Miss Havisham's authority to receive the nine hundred pounds for Herbert. Mr. Jaggers' eyes retired a little deeper into his head when I handed him the tablets, but he presently handed them over to Wemmick with instructions to draw the check for his signature. From Little Britain I went, with my check in my pocket, to Miss Skiffins' brother, the accountant; and he going straight to Clarriker's and bringing Clarriker to me, I had the great

1 satisfaction of concluding that arrangement. It was the only good thing I had done, and the only completed thing I had done, since I was first apprised of my great expectations.

Clarriker informed me that he would now be able to establish a small branch house in the East and that Herbert in his new partnership capacity would go out and take charge of it. And now indeed I felt as if my last anchor were loosening its hold, and I should soon be driving with the winds and waves.

We had now got into the month of March. My left arm took in the natural course so long to heal that I was still unable to get a coat on. My right arm was tolerably restored—disfigured, but fairly serviceable.

On a Monday morning, when Herbert and I were at breakfast, I received the following letter from Wemmick by the post.

Walworth. Burn this as soon as read. Early in the week, or say Wednesday, you might do what you know of, if you felt disposed to try it.

2 Now burn.

When I had shown this to Herbert and had put it in the fire—but not before we had both got it by heart—we considered what to do. For, of course, my being disabled could now be no longer kept out of view.

"I have thought it over again and again," said Herbert, "and I think I know a better course than taking a Thames waterman. Take Startop. A good fellow, a skilled hand, fond of us, and enthusiastic and honorable."

I had thought of him more than once.

"But how much would you tell him, Herbert?"

3 "It is necessary to tell him very little. Let him suppose it a mere freak, but a secret one, until the morning comes; then let him know that there is urgent reason for your getting Provis aboard and away. You go with him?"

"No doubt."

"Where?"

It seemed to me almost indifferent what port we made for—Hamburg, Rotterdam, 4 Antwerp—the place signified little, so that he was out of England. Any foreign steamer that fell in our way and would take us up would do. I had always proposed to myself to get him well down the river in the boat; certainly well beyond Gravesend, which was a critical place for 5 search or inquiry if suspicion were afoot. As foreign steamers would leave London at about the time of high water, our plan would be to get down the river by a previous ebb tide, and lie by in some quiet spot until we could pull off to one. The time when one would be due where we lay, wherever that might be, could be calculated pretty nearly, if we made inquiries beforehand.

Herbert assented to all this, and we went out immediately after breakfast to pursue our investigations. We found that a steamer for Hamburg was likely to suit our purpose best, and we directed our thoughts chiefly to that vessel. But we noted down what other foreign steamers would leave London with the same tide, and we satisfied ourselves that we knew the build and color of each. We then separated for a few hours; I to get at once such passports as were necessary; Herbert, to see Startop at

## Chapter 37

1

Pip has finally taken charge of his life. He accepts responsibility and keeps his commitment to Herbert.

2

*What does Wemmick mean by "do what you know of"? Why does he instruct Pip to burn the note?* In his typical, evasive manner, Wemmick is informing Pip that time is right to carry out escape plan which requires strict secrecy.

3

**Suspense.** Although Startop is good friend, mission is so important and dangerous they cannot tell even him.

4

Hamburg is in Germany, Antwerp in Belgium, and Rotterdam in Netherlands.

5

Plan to escape at high tide anticipates **climax** (high point) of story, which will take place on river.



6

**What is the tone of this letter?**

Responses will vary. Literal message is that writer knows something about Provis. Tone is menacing. Cryptic, unsigned note commanding Pip to come alone to remote area at night sounds threatening, adds suspense.

7

**Suspense.** Pip's having to make instant decisions heightens tension.

8

**Do you think Pip's decision to go was wise? Why?** Responses will vary. Most will agree that he was wise to go. He would not have forgiven himself for allowing harm to come to Provis.

9

Here tension is lessened through comic relief. Humor arises from landlord's tendency to tell tall tales and from difference between legendary and real Pip.

his lodgings. When we met again at one o'clock I, for my part, was prepared with passports; Herbert had seen Startop, and he was more than ready to join.

Those two would pull a pair of oars, we settled, and I would steer; our charge would be sitter, and keep quiet. We arranged that Herbert should prepare Provis to come down to some stairs hard by the house, on Wednesday, when he saw us approach, and not sooner; that all arrangements with him should be concluded that Monday night. These precautions well understood by both of us, I went home.

On opening the outer door of our chambers with my key, I found a letter in the box, directed to me—a very dirty letter, though not ill written. It had been delivered by hand and its contents were these:

6 If you are not afraid to come to the old marshes tonight or tomorrow night at nine, and to come to the little sluice house by the limekiln, you had better come. If you want information regarding *your uncle Provis*, you had better come and tell no one and lose no time. *You must come alone.* Bring this with you.

7 What to do now, I could not tell. And the worst was that I must decide quickly, or I should miss the afternoon coach, which would take me down in time for tonight. Tomorrow night I could not think of going, for it would be too close upon the time of the flight. For anything I knew, the information might have some important bearing on the flight itself. I resolved to go.

I had to read this mysterious epistle again, twice, before its injunction to me to be secret got into my mind. Yielding to it, I left a note in pencil to Herbert, telling him that I had decided to hurry down and back to ascertain for myself how Miss Havisham was faring. I

caught the coach just as it came out of the yard. I was the only inside passenger, jolting away knee-deep in straw. And now I began to wonder at myself for being in the coach, and to doubt whether I had sufficient reason for being there, and to consider whether I should get out presently and go back, and to argue against ever heeding an anonymous communication, and, in short, to pass through all those phases of contradiction and indecision to which I suppose very few hurried people are strangers. Still, the reference to Provis by name mastered everything. I reasoned that in case any harm should befall him through my  
8 not going, how could I ever forgive myself!

It was dark before we got down. Avoiding the Blue Boar, I put up at an inn of minor reputation down the town and ordered some dinner. While it was preparing, I went to Satis House and inquired for Miss Havisham; she was still very ill, though considered something better.

As I was not able to cut my dinner, the old landlord with a shining bald head did it for me.  
9 This bringing us into conversation, he was so good as to entertain me with my own story—of course with the popular feature that Pumblechook was my earliest benefactor and the founder of my fortunes.

"Do you know the young man?" said I.

"Know him?" repeated the landlord. "Ever since he was—no height at all."

"Does he ever come back to this neighborhood?"

"Aye, he comes back," said the landlord, "to his great friends, now and again, and gives the cold shoulder to the man that made him."

"What man is that?"

"Him that I speak of," said the landlord. "Mr. Pumblechook."

"Is he ungrateful to no one else?"

"No doubt he would be, if he could," returned the landlord, "but he can't. And why?

Because Pumblechook done everything for him."

"Does Pumblechook say so?"

"Say so!" replied the landlord. "He han't no call to say so."

"But does he say so?"

"It would turn a man's blood to white wine winegar to hear him tell of it, sir," said the landlord.

I thought, "Yet Joe, dear Joe, *you* never tell of it. Long-suffering and loving Joe, *you* never complain. Nor you, sweet-tempered Biddy!"

10 I had never been struck at so keenly for my thanklessness to Joe, as through the brazen imposter Pumblechook. The fals<sup>er</sup> he, the truer Joe; the meaner he, the nobler Joe.

My heart was deeply and most deservedly humbled as I mused over the fire for an hour or more. The striking of the clock aroused me, and I got up and had my coat fastened round

11 my neck, and went out. I had previously sought in my pockets for the letter, that I might refer to it again, but I could not find it, and was uneasy to think that it must have been dropped in the straw of the coach. I knew very well, however, that the appointed place was the little sluice house by the limekiln on the marshes, and the hour nine. Toward the marshes I now went straight, having no time to spare.

## Chapter 38

*Trabb's boy leads a rescue party.*

1 It was a dark night, there was a melancholy wind, and the marshes were very dismal. A stranger would have found them insupportable, and even to me they were so oppressive that I hesitated, half inclined to go back. It was a half hour before I drew near to the kiln. The

lime was burning with a sluggish, stifling smell, but the fires were made up and left, and no workmen were visible. Hard by was a small stone quarry.

Coming up to the marsh level out of this excavation, I saw a light in the old sluice house. I quickened my pace and knocked at the door. 2 There was no answer, and I knocked again. No answer still, and I tried the latch.

The door yielded. Looking in, I saw a lighted candle on a table, a bench, and a mattress on a truckle bedstead.<sup>1</sup> As there was a loft above, I called, "Is there anyone here?" but no voice answered. Then I looked at my watch, and finding that it was past nine, called again, "Is there anyone here?" There being still no answer, I went out at the door, irresolute what to do.

It was beginning to rain fast. Seeing nothing, I turned back into the house. While I was considering that someone must have been there lately and must soon be coming back, or the candle would not be burning, it came into my head to look if the wick were long. I had taken up the candle in my hand, when it was extinguished by some violent shock, and the next thing I comprehended was that I had been caught in a strong running noose, thrown over my head from behind.

4 "Now," said a suppressed voice with an oath, "I've got you!"

"What is this?" I cried, struggling. "Who is it? Help, help, help!"

Not only were my arms pulled close to my sides, but the pressure on my bad arm caused me exquisite pain. A strong man's hand was set against my mouth to deaden my cries, and with a hot breath always close to me, I struggled ineffectually in the dark until I was fastened tight to the wall. "And now," said the suppressed voice with another oath, "call out

1. **truckle bedstead:** low bed on wheels, usually rolled underneath another bed.

### 10

**Characterization.** Further evidence of Pip's maturity. He recognizes how badly he has treated Joe.

### 11

**Plot.** Pip's misplacing letter leads to his rescue.

## Chapter 38

### 1

**Setting.** "Dismal" and "melancholy" surroundings set stage for bad things that happen to Pip at limekiln.

### 2

Story's pace is also quickening, creating tension.

### 3

Dickens' style adds to tension and drama. Short sentences emphasize both Pip's pace and the story's.

### 4

"Oath" implies that Pip's captor is vulgar, coarse man.

5  
What does Pip mean by “in a dangerous strait”? Pip means that he is in a dangerous situation.

6  
Epithet. Orlick’s insulting name for Pip, “wolf,” implies that Pip is predatory. Reader knows he is not.

7  
Pip is “playing dumb.” He knows exactly what Orlick means.

8  
Characterization. Orlick is a truly vicious man. Scene reminds reader of Orlick’s intimidating tale of Devil who lived in forge and used boys as fuel for fire.

again, and I’ll make short work of you!”

Faint and sick with pain, I tried to ease my arm, but I was bound too tight. After groping about for a little, he began to strike a light. Presently I saw his lips breathing on the tinder, and then a flare of light flashed up and showed me Orlick.

Whom I had looked for, I don’t know. I had not looked for him. Seeing him, I felt that I was in a dangerous strait indeed, and I kept my eyes upon him.

He lighted the candle from the flaring match with great deliberation, and dropped the match, and trod it out. Then he put the candle away from him on the table, so that he could see me, and sat with his arms folded on the table, and looked at me. I made out that I was fastened to a stout perpendicular ladder a few inches from the wall—a fixture there—the means of ascent to the loft above.

“Now,” said he, when we had surveyed one another for some time, “I’ve got you.”

“Why have you lured me here?”

“Don’t you know?” said he, with a deadly look.

“Why have you set upon me in the dark?”

“Because I mean to do it all myself. One keeps a secret better than two. Oh, you enemy, you enemy!”

His enjoyment of the spectacle I furnished, as he sat with his arms folded on the table, shaking his head at me, made me tremble. As I watched him in silence, he put his hand into the corner at his side, and took up a gun with a brass-bound stock.

“Do you know this?” said he, making as if he would take aim at me. “Do you know where

6 you saw it afore? Speak, wolf!”

“Yes,” I answered.

“You cost me that place.<sup>2</sup> You did. Speak!”

2. that place: Orlick’s position at Miss Havisham’s house.

“What else could I do?”

“You did that, and that would be enough, without more. How dared you come betwixt me and a young woman I liked?”

7 “When did I?”

“When didn’t you? It was you as always give Old Orlick a bad name to her.”

“You gave it to yourself; you gained it for yourself. I could have done you no harm, if you had done yourself none.”

“You’re a liar. And you’ll take any pains, and spend any money, to drive me out of this country, will you?” said he, repeating my words to Biddy in the last interview I had with her. “Now, I’ll tell you a piece of information. It was never so worth your while to get me out of this country as it is tonight.” As he shook his heavy hand at me, with his mouth snarling like a tiger’s, I felt that it was true.

“What are you going to do to me?”

“I’m a-going,” said he, bringing his fist down upon the table with a heavy blow, and rising as the blow fell, to give it greater force, “I’m a-going to have your life!”

He leaned forward staring at me, slowly unclenched his hand and drew it across his mouth as if his mouth watered for me, and sat down again.

“You was always in Old Orlick’s way since ever you was a child. You goes out of his way this present night. He’ll have no more on you. You’re dead.”

I felt that I had come to the brink of my grave. For a moment I looked wildly round my trap for any chance of escape; but there was none.

8 “More than that,” said he, “I won’t have a rag of you, I won’t have a bone of you, left on earth. I’ll put your body in the kiln—I’d carry two such to it, on my shoulders—and, let people suppose what they may of you, they shall never know nothing.”

My mind with inconceivable rapidity fol-



lowed out all the consequences of such a death. Estella's father would believe I had deserted him, would be taken, would die accusing me; even Herbert would doubt me when he compared the letter I had left for him with the fact that I had called at Miss Havisham's gate for only a moment; Joe and Biddy would never know how sorry I had been that night.

Orlick had been drinking, and his eyes were red and bloodshot. Around his neck was slung a tin bottle. He brought the bottle to his lips and took a fiery drink from it.

"Wolf!" said he, folding his arms again. "Old Orlick's a-going to tell you somethink. It was you as did for your shrew sister."

"It was you, villain," said I.

9 "I tell you it was your doing—I tell you it was done through you," he retorted, catching up the gun, and making a blow with the stock at the vacant air between us. "I come upon her from behind, as I come upon you tonight. I giv' it her! I left her for dead, and if there had been a limekiln as nigh her as there is now nigh you, she shouldn't have come to life again. But it warn't Old Orlick as did it; it was you. You was favored, and he was bullied and beat. Old Orlick bullied and beat, eh? Now you pays for  
10 it. You done it; now you pays for it."

He drank again, and became more ferocious. He took up the candle, and shading it with his murderous hand so as to throw its light on me, stood before me, looking at me and enjoying the sight.

"Wolf, I'll tell you something more. It was Old Orlick as you tumbled over on your stairs that night. And why was Old Orlick there? I'll tell you something more, wolf. You and her *have* pretty well hunted me out of this country, so far as getting a easy living in it goes, and I've took up with new companions and new masters. Some of 'em writes my letters when I wants 'em wrote. They writes fifty hands; they're not like sneaking you as writes but one.

I've had a firm mind and a firm will to have your life, since you was down here at your sister's burying. I han't seen a way to get you safe, and I've looked arter you to know your ins and outs. For, says Old Orlick to himself, 'Somehow or another I'll have him!' What! When I looks for you, I finds your Uncle Provis, eh?

"*You* with a uncle, too! But when Old Orlick come for to hear that your Uncle Provis had mostlike wore the leg iron wot Old Orlick had picked up on these meshes ever so many year ago, and wot he kept by him till he dropped your sister with it—when he comes to hear that—hey?—"

In his savage taunting, he flared the candle so close at me that I turned my face aside to save it from the flame.

11 "Ah!" he cried, laughing, after doing it again. "The burned child dreads the fire! Old Orlick knowed you was burned, Old Orlick knowed you was a-smuggling your Uncle Provis away, Old Orlick's a match for you and knowed you'd come tonight! Now I'll tell you something more, wolf, and this ends it. There's them that's as good a match for your Uncle Provis as Old Orlick has been for you. There's them that can't and that won't have Magwitch—yes, *I* know the name!—alive in the same land with them, and that's had sure information of him when he was alive in another land, as that he shouldn't leave it unbeknown and put them in danger. P'raps it's them that writes fifty hands, and that's not like sneaking you as writes but one. 'Ware Compeyson, Magwitch, and the gallows!'"

There was a clear space of a few feet between the table and the opposite wall. Within this space he now slouched backward and forward with his hands hanging loose and heavy  
12 at his sides, and with his eyes scowling at me. I had no grain of hope left.

Of a sudden he stopped, took the cork out of his bottle, and tossed it away. Light as it was, I

9

**Conflict.** Orlick's hatred of Pip and Pip's family is, in part, a result of economic and social conditions. Orlick resents Pip's being "favored." Dickens usually makes working-class characters sympathetic—Joe is "good" character in novel—but Orlick is portrayed very negatively.

10

Orlick's reaction to social and economic inequality is violence. He seems to feel that someone must pay for injustice. Blaming Pip, however, is irrational.

11

**Complication.** There is a conspiracy to capture Provis, involving not only base, uneducated criminals like Orlick but also intelligent, determined men, "them that writes fifty hands."

12

Secrecy with which Pip kept appointment seems to preclude any expectation of rescue.

13

**Imagery.** One-sentence description of flurry of sights and sounds.

14

Trabb's boy is obviously concerned about Pip. His change in attitude toward Pip emphasizes change in Pip.

15

Narrative shifts from Orlick subplot back to main story.

16

**Setting.** Lighter weather suggests departure of Orlick, just as clouds Pip saw before encounter with Orlick portended approaching violence.

17

**What is the significance of Pip's encounter with Orlick?** Responses will vary. Although seemingly digressive, it has several possible meanings: provides opportunity for reader to discover who Provis' enemies are; resolves subplot of Orlick's hatred for Pip; reintroduces Trabb's boy.

heard it fall like a plummet.<sup>3</sup> He swallowed slowly, tilting up the bottle by little and little, and now he looked at me no more. The last few drops of liquor he poured into the palm of his hand and licked up. Then with a sudden hurry of violence and swearing horribly, he threw the bottle from him, and stooped; and I saw in his hand a stone hammer with a long heavy handle.

I shouted out with all my might, and struggled with all my might. It was only my head and my legs that I could move, but to that extent I struggled with all the force that was within me. In the same instant I heard responsive shouts, saw figures and a gleam of light dash in at the door, heard voices and tumult, and saw Orlick emerge from a struggle of men, clear the table at a leap, and fly out into the night!

After a blank, I found that I was lying unbound on the floor, in the same place, with my head on someone's knee. My eyes were fixed on the ladder against the wall when there came between me and it, a face. The face of Trabb's boy!

14 "I think he's all right!" said Trabb's boy, in a sober voice. "But ain't he just pale, though!"

At these words, the face of him who supported me looked over into mine, and I saw my supporter to be—

"Herbert! Great Heaven!"

"Softly," said Herbert. "Gently, Handel. Don't be too eager."

"And our old comrade, Startop!" I cried, as he too bent over me.

15 "Remember what he is going to assist us in," said Herbert, "and be calm."

The allusion made me spring up, though I dropped again from the pain in my arm. "The time has not gone by, Herbert, has it? What

night is tonight? How long have I been here?"

"The time has not gone by. It is still Monday night."

"Thank God!"

"And you have all tomorrow, Tuesday, to rest in," said Herbert. "Can you stand?"

"Yes, yes," said I, "I can walk, I have no hurt but in this throbbing arm."

They did what they could until we could get to the town and obtain some cooling lotion to put upon it. Trabb's boy—Trabb's overgrown young man now—went before us with a lantern. But the moon was a good two hours higher than when I had last seen the sky, and the night though rainy was much lighter.

Entreating Herbert to tell me how he had come to my rescue, I learned that I had in my hurry dropped the letter, open, in our chambers, where he, coming home to bring with him Startop, found it very soon after I was gone. Its tone made him uneasy, and he set off for the coach office with Startop. Finding that the afternoon coach was gone, he resolved to follow in a post chaise. So he and Startop arrived at the Blue Boar, fully expecting there to find me, or tidings of me; but, finding neither, went on to Miss Havisham's, where they lost me. Hereupon they went back to the hotel to refresh themselves and to get someone to guide them upon the marshes. Among the loungers under the Boar's archway happened to be Trabb's boy. Thus Trabb's boy became their guide, and with him they went out to the sluice house. Herbert left his guide and Startop on the edge of the quarry, and went on by himself, and stole round the house two or three times. As he could hear nothing but indistinct sounds of one deep rough voice, he began to doubt whether I was there, when suddenly I cried out loudly, and he answered the cries, and rushed in, closely followed by the other two.

3. **plummet:** a lead weight attached to a string, used by carpenters to test the straightness of a wall.

We relinquished all thoughts of pursuing Orlick at that time. For the present, under the circumstances, we deemed it prudent to make rather light of the matter to Trabb's boy. When we parted, I presented him with two guineas (which seemed to meet his views), and told him that I was sorry ever to have had an ill opinion of him (which made no impression on him at all).

It was daylight when we reached the Temple, and I went at once to bed, and lay in bed all day.

**18** My terror, as I lay there, of falling ill and being unfitted for tomorrow, was so besetting that I wonder it did not disable me of itself. I started at every footstep and every sound, believing that he was discovered and taken, and this was the messenger to tell me so. I persuaded myself that I knew he was taken. It happened sometimes that in the mere escape of a fatigued mind, I dozed for some moments or forgot; then I would say to myself with a start, "Now it has come, and I am turning delirious!"

They kept me very quiet all day, and kept my arm constantly dressed, and gave me cooling drinks. Whenever I fell asleep, I awoke with the notion I had had in the sluice house, that a long time had elapsed, and the opportunity to save him was gone. About midnight I got out of bed and went to Herbert with the conviction that I had been asleep for four-and-twenty hours, and that Wednesday was past. It was the last self-exhausting effort of my fretfulness, for after that, I slept soundly.

Wednesday morning was dawning when I looked out of the window. Herbert lay asleep in his bed, and our old fellow student lay asleep on the sofa. I could not dress myself without help, but I made up the fire, which was still burning, and got some coffee ready for them. In good time they too started up strong and well, and we admitted the sharp morning

air at the windows, and looked at the tide that was still flowing toward us.

"When it turns at nine o'clock," said Herbert cheerfully, "look out for us, and stand ready, you over there at Mill Pond Bank!"

## Chapter 39

*An informer goes to his death.*

**1** It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade. We had our peacoats<sup>1</sup> with us, and I took a bag. Of all my worldly possessions, I took no more than the few necessities that filled the bag. Where I might go, what I might do, or when I might return, were questions utterly unknown to me; nor did I vex my mind with them, for it was wholly set on Provis' safety. We loitered down to the Temple stairs, and stood loitering there, as if we were not quite decided to go upon the water at all. Of course I had taken care that the boat should be ready, and everything in order. After a little show of indecision, we went on board and cast off; Herbert in the bow, I steering. It was then about high water—half-past eight.

Our plan was this. The tide, beginning to run down at nine, and being with us until three, we intended still to creep on after it had turned, and row against it until dark. We should then be well in those long reaches below Gravesend, between Kent and Essex, where the river is broad and solitary, where the waterside inhabitants are very few, and where lone public houses are scattered here and

1. **peacoats:** thick, woolen jackets, often worn by seamen.

**18**

**Characterization.** Pip's fear now, like his fear when he was Orlick's captive, is that of losing chance to prove that he has changed for better.

**19**

Pip's fear of delirium is particularly apt. Earlier, he had treated Joe poorly because of his own captivity in the delirium of his dreamlike "expectations."

## Chapter 39

**1**

**Setting.** Dickens often uses weather to suggest atmosphere of story. Most noticeable feature of weather is conflict between two extremes. Portends day of conflict between sunny optimism and wintry adversity.



there, of which we could choose one for a resting place. There, we meant to lie by all night. The steamer for Hamburg and the steamer for Rotterdam would start from London at about nine on Thursday morning. We should know at what time to expect them and would hail the first; so that if by any accident we were not taken aboard, we should have another chance. We knew the distinguishing marks of each vessel.

Old London Bridge was soon passed, and old Billingsgate market with its oyster boats and Dutchmen, and we were in among the tiers of shipping. Here were steamers, loading and unloading goods, and here, at her moorings, was tomorrow's steamer for Rotterdam, of which we took good notice; and here tomorrow's for Hamburg, under whose bowsprit<sup>2</sup> we crossed. And now I, sitting in the stern, could see, with a faster beating heart, Mill Pond Bank and Mill Pond stairs.

"Is he there?" said Herbert.

"Not yet."

"Right! He was not to come down till he saw us. Can you see his signal!"

"Not well from here; but I think I see it. Now I see him! Pull both. Easy, Herbert. Oars!"

We touched the stairs lightly for a single moment, and he was on board and we were off again. He had a boat cloak with him, and a black canvas bag, and he looked as like a river pilot as my heart could have wished.

"Dear boy!" he said, putting his arm on my shoulder, as he took his seat. "Faithful dear boy, well done. Thank'ee, thank'ee!"

Again among the tiers of shipping, in and out, avoiding rusty chain cables, frayed hempen hawsers,<sup>3</sup> and bobbing buoys, sinking for the moment, floating broken baskets, scattering

floating chips of wood and shaving, cleaving floating scum of coal in and out—upon the clearer river, where the ships' boys might take their fenders<sup>4</sup> in, no longer fishing in troubled waters with them over the side, and where the festooned sails might fly out to the wind.

At the stairs where we had taken him aboard, and ever since, I had looked warily for any token of our being suspected. I had seen none. He had his boat cloak on him, and looked, as I have said, a natural part of the scene. It was remarkable that he was the least anxious of any of us.

"If you knowed, dear boy," he said to me, "what it is to sit here alonger my dear boy and have my smoke, arter having been day by day betwixt four walls, you'd envy me. But you don't know what it is."

"I think I know the delights of freedom," I answered.

"Ah," said he, shaking his head gravely. "But you don't know it equal to me. You must have been under lock and key, dear boy, to know it equal to me—but I ain't a-going to be low."

"If all goes well," said I, "you will be perfectly free and safe again, within a few hours."

"Well," he returned, drawing a long breath, "I hope so."

We made what way we could until the sun went down. At length we descried a light and a roof, and presently afterward ran alongside a little causeway made of stones. I stepped ashore, and found the light to be in the window of a public house. It was a dirty place enough, and I dare say not unknown to smuggling adventurers; but there was a good fire in the kitchen, and there were eggs and bacon to eat. Also, there were two double-bedded

**2**  
*Dutchmen:* sailing vessels.

**3**  
Cables, clutter, and floating trash suggest dirty, dangerous area.

**4**  
Irony. Provis feels delight in freedom just before losing it forever.

**5**  
*What does Pip mean by his answer?* Responses will vary. On a literal level, he may refer to his recent escape from Orlick. Might also refer to Pip's freedom from the illusions and "expectations" that have trapped him.

**6**  
Irony. Pip and his friends might be described as "smuggling adventurers."

2. **bowsprit** (bou'sprit'): a pole or spar projecting from the bow (front) of a ship.

3. **hawsers** (hō'zərz): ropes.

4. **fenders**: anything used as padding against the sides of ships, to protect them from damage in bumping against wharves or other ships.

rooms—"such as they were," the landlord said. No other company was in the house than the landlord, his wife, and a grizzled male creature, the "Jack"<sup>5</sup> of the little causeway.

With this assistant, I went down to the boat again, and we all came ashore, and brought out the oars, and rudder, and boathook, and all else, and hauled her up for the night. We made a very good meal by the kitchen fire, and then apportioned the bedrooms; Herbert and Startop were to occupy one; I and our charge the other. We considered ourselves well off, for a more solitary place we could not have found.

7 While we were comforting ourselves by the fire after our meal, the Jack asked me if we had seen a four-oared galley going up with the tide. When I told him no, he said she must have gone down then, and yet she "took up too," when she left there.

"They must ha' thought better on't for some reason or another," said the Jack, "and gone down."

"A four-oared galley did you say?" said I.

"A four," said the Jack, "and two sitters."

"Did they come ashore here?"

"They put in with a stone two-gallon jar for some beer."

8 This dialogue made us all uneasy, and me very uneasy. The dismal wind was muttering round the house, the tide was flapping at the shore, and I had a feeling that we were caged and threatened. A four-oared galley hovering about in so unusual a way as to attract this notice was an ugly circumstance that I could not get rid of. When I had induced Provis to go up to bed, I went outside with my two companions (Startop by this time knew the state of the case) and held council. On the whole we deemed it the better course to lie where we were, until within an hour or so of the steamer's time, and

then to get out in her track, and drift easily with the tide. Having settled to do this, we returned into the house and went to bed.

I lay down with the greater part of my clothes on, and slept well for a few hours.

9 When I awoke, the wind had risen. I looked out of the window. It commanded the causeway where we had hauled up our boat, and I saw two men looking into her. They passed by under the window, looking at nothing else, and they did not go down to the landing places but struck across the marshes. In that light, however, I soon lost them, and feeling very cold, lay down to think of the matter and fell asleep again.

10 We were up early. As we walked to and fro, all four together, I deemed it right to recount what I had seen. Again our charge was the least anxious of the party. However, I proposed that he and I should walk away together to a distant point, and that the boat should take us aboard there. This being considered a good precaution, soon after breakfast he and I set forth, without saying anything at the tavern.

He smoked his pipe as we went along, and sometimes stopped to clap me on the shoulder. One would have supposed that it was I who was in danger, not he, and that he was reassuring me. We spoke very little.

11 We waited until we saw our boat coming round. We got aboard easily and rowed out into the track of the steamer. By that time it wanted but ten minutes of one o'clock, and we began to look out for her smoke.

But it was half past one before we saw her smoke, and soon after we saw behind it the smoke of another steamer. As they were coming on at full speed, we got the two bags ready, and took that opportunity of saying goodbye to Herbert and Startop. We had all shaken hands cordially, and neither Herbert's eyes nor mine were quite dry, when I saw a four-oared galley shoot out from under the bank

7

**Foreshadowing.** Sighting of galley complicates escape plan and foreshadows later encounter with Compeyson.

8

**Foreshadowing.** "Dismal" weather creates tension and expectation of unfavorable events.

9

Worsening weather corresponds with inspection of boat by unknown men.

10

**Who are the "four" who walk together? Why is Provis the "least anxious of the party"?** Group consists of Pip, Herbert, Startop, and Provis, who is "charge." Provis is least anxious, perhaps because his life as fugitive has prepared him for such stealthy adventures. Also, his age and wisdom might make him more courageous than others in group.

11

**Foreshadowing.** Unforeseen delay of ship makes reader expect other obstacles to plan.

12

Parting is painful for Pip and Herbert.

5. **Jack:** a sailor.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Exploring the Subject

Magwitch is being pulled from the water after killing his old enemy Compeyson. His expression of mingled relief, weariness, and spent emotion suggests the traumatic ordeal he has just undergone. The weariness might also be the result of his long, hard life. This is plausible when we consider that his life is now over: he is virtually doomed to execution. On the brighter side, he has revenged himself on the novel's chief villain—Compeyson, the cause of both his and Miss Havisham's downfall. His look of weary relief reflects his accomplished goals—Compeyson is dead and Pip is a gentleman.

### Ideas for Writing

This scene shows the tragic outcome of Pip's attempt to smuggle Magwitch out of England. The details of the plan take into account the tides, characteristics of the river and its inlets and docks, and the various types of ships on the river. A thorough knowledge of these details would help the reader understand the intricacies of the escape plan. Ask students to do research and prepare brief essays on ship design in the nineteenth century or life along the Thames in the nineteenth century.







but a little way ahead of us, and row out into the same track.

- 13** I called to Herbert and Startop to keep before the tide, that the steamer might see us lying by for her, and adjured Provis to sit quite still, wrapped in his cloak. He answered cheerily, "Trust to me, dear boy," and sat like a statue. Meanwhile the galley, which was skillfully handled, had crossed us, let us come up with her, and fallen alongside. Leaving just room enough for the play of the oars, she kept alongside, drifting when we drifted, and pulling a stroke or two when we pulled. Of the two sitters, one held the rudder lines, and looked at us attentively—as did all the rowers; the other sitter was wrapped up, much as Provis was, and seemed to shrink and whisper some instruction to the steerer as he looked at us. Not a word was spoken in either boat.

Startop could make out, after a few minutes, which steamer was first, and gave me the word "Hamburg," in a low voice as we sat face to face. She was nearing us very fast, and the beating of her paddles grew louder and louder. I felt as if her shadow were absolutely upon us, when the galley hailed us. I answered.

- 15** "You have a returned transport there," said the man who held the lines. "That's the man, wrapped in the cloak. His name is Abel Magwitch, otherwise Provis. I apprehend that man, and call upon him to surrender, and you to assist."

At the same moment, without giving any audible direction to his crew, he ran the galley aboard of us. They had pulled one sudden stroke ahead, had got their oars in, had run athwart us, and were holding on to our gunwale before we knew what they were doing. This caused great confusion on board of the steamer, and I heard them calling to us, and heard the order given to stop the paddles, and heard them stop, but felt her driving down

**13**

The climax of this stage begins here, ends with the recapture of Magwitch.

**14**

**Foreshadowing.** One of sitters has something to hide.

**15**

In Dickens' time, many prisoners were transported to Australia and forbidden to return.

16

"The same moment" is used five times in this paragraph, underscoring the swiftness of events.

17

Conflicts between Magwitch and Compeyson and Magwitch and authorities are resolved.

18

At this point in story, Pip begins to refer to Magwitch by his true name instead of his alias.

19

Compeyson is presumed dead.

20

In the presence of authorities, Magwitch whispers out of old habit.

21

Further evidence that Pip has matured. He is concerned about Magwitch's well-being, seems unconcerned about the fortune in the pocketbook.

upon us irresistibly. In the same moment, I saw the steersman of the galley lay his hand on his prisoner's shoulder, and saw that both boats were swinging round with the force of the tide, and saw that all hands on board the steamer were running forward frantically. 16 Still in the same moment, I saw the prisoner start up, lean across his captor, and pull the cloak from the neck of the shrinking sitter in the galley. Still in the same moment, I saw that the face disclosed was the face of the other convict of long ago. Still in the same moment, I saw the face tilt backward with a white terror on it that I shall never forget, and heard a great cry on board the steamer and a loud splash in the water, and felt the boat sink from under me.

It was but for an instant that I seemed to struggle; that instant past I was taken on board the galley. Herbert was there, and Startop was there; but our boat was gone, and the two convicts were gone.

What with the cries aboard the steamer, and the furious blowing off of her steam, and her driving on, and our driving on, I could not at first distinguish sky from water or shore from shore; but the crew of the galley righted her with great speed, and, pulling certain swift strong strokes ahead, lay upon their oars, every man looking silently and eagerly at the water astern. Presently a dark object was seen in it, bearing toward us on the tide. No man spoke, but the steersman kept the boat straight and true before it. As it came nearer, I saw it to be 17 Magwitch, swimming, but not freely. He was taken on board, and instantly manacled at the wrists and ankles.

The galley was kept steady, and the silent eager lookout at the water was resumed. But the Rotterdam steamer now came up, and apparently not understanding what had happened, came on at speed. By the time she had been hailed and stopped, both steamers were

drifting away from us, and we were rising and falling in a troubled wake of water. The lookout was kept long after all was still again, and the two steamers were gone; but everybody knew that it was hopeless now.

At length we gave it up, and pulled under the shore toward the tavern we had lately left. Here, I was able to get some comforts for Magwitch—Provis no longer—who had received some very severe injury in the chest and a deep cut in the head.

He told me that he believed himself to have gone under the keel of the steamer, and to have been struck on the head in rising. The injury to his chest (which rendered his breathing extremely painful) he thought he had received against the side of the galley. He added that he did not pretend to say what he might have done to Compeyson, but that in the moment of his laying his hand on his cloak to identify him, that villain had staggered up and back, and they had both gone overboard together; when the sudden wrenching of Magwitch out of our boat had capsized us. He told me in a whisper that they had gone down, fiercely locked in each other's arms, and that there had been a struggle underwater, and that he had disengaged himself, struck out, and swum away.

I never had any reason to doubt the exact truth of what he had told me. The officer who steered the galley gave the same account of their going overboard.

21 When I asked this officer's permission to change the prisoner's wet clothes by purchasing any spare garments I could get at the public house, he gave it readily, merely observing that he must take charge of everything his prisoner had about him. So the pocketbook which had once been in my hands passed into the officer's. He further gave me leave to accompany the prisoner to London, but declined to accord that grace to my two friends.

We remained at the public house until the

tide turned, and then Magwitch was carried down to the galley and put on board. Herbert and Startop were to get to London by land, as soon as they could. We had a doleful parting, and when I took my place by Magwitch's side, I felt that that was my place henceforth while he lived.

For now my repugnance to him had all melted away, and in the hunted, wounded, shackled creature who held my hand in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously toward me with great constancy through a series of years. I only saw in him a much better man than I had been to Joe.

His breathing became more difficult and painful as the night drew on, and often he could not repress a groan. I tried to rest him on the arm I could use, in any easy position; but it was dreadful to think that I could not be sorry at heart for his being badly hurt, since it was unquestionably best that he should die. That there were, still living, people enough who were able and willing to identify him, I could not doubt. That he would be leniently treated, I could not hope—he who had been presented in the worst light at his trial, who had since broken prison and been tried again, who had returned from transportation under a life sentence, and who had occasioned the death of the man who was the cause of his arrest.

As we returned toward the setting sun we had yesterday left behind us, and as the stream of our hopes seemed all running back, I told him how grieved I was to think he had come home for my sake.

"Dear boy," he answered, "I'm quite content to take my chance. I've seen my boy, and he can be a gentleman without me."

No. I had thought about that while we had been there side by side. I foresaw that, being

convicted, his possessions would be forfeited to the Crown.<sup>6</sup>

"Look'ee here, dear boy," said he. "It's best as a gentleman should not be knowed to be long to me now. Only come to see me as if you come by chance alonger Wemmick. Sit where I can see you when I am sworn to, for the last o' many times, and I don't ask no more."

"I will never stir from your side," said I, "when I am suffered to be near you. Please God, I will be as true to you as you have been to me!"

I felt his hand tremble as it held mine, and he turned his face away as he lay in the bottom of the boat, and I heard that old sound in his throat—softened now, like all the rest of him. It was a good thing that he had touched this point, for it put into my mind what I might not otherwise have thought of until too late: that he need never know how his hopes of enriching me had perished.

## Chapter 40

*Mr. Wemmick takes a walk.*

He was taken to the Police court next day, and would have been immediately committed for trial, but that it was necessary to send down for an old officer of the prison ship from which he had once escaped, to speak to his identity. Nobody doubted it; but Compeyson, who had meant to depose to it, was dead. I had gone direct to Mr. Jaggers at his private house, on my arrival overnight, to retain his assistance, but he told me that no power on earth could prevent its going against us.

I imparted to Mr. Jaggers my design of

6. **forfeited** (fôr'fit-əd) to the **Crown**: taken by the government, which had the legal right to the possessions of a prisoner in Magwitch's position.

22

**Characterization.** Pip accepts his responsibility, makes commitment to Magwitch.

23

**How had Pip felt about Magwitch before? Why does he use the phrase "melted away" to describe his change in attitude?** Previously Pip despised Magwitch, considering him evil, dangerous, dirty, and common. "Melted away," a figurative description, implies Pip's previous feelings were "icy."

24

Pip considers the inconsistencies of justice system. Courts would consider surface features of Magwitch's record—repeated flouting of law and lack of respect for human life—and ignore the realities that Magwitch lost his wife, was unjustly sentenced, worked hard in Australia, and returned to England only to help someone he barely knew.

25

**Has Magwitch succeeded in making Pip a "gentleman"?** Responses will vary. He has not succeeded if being a gentleman requires material wealth, but most will say that Magwitch has succeeded, unintentionally, in making Pip a compassionate man with a deep sense of honor.



## Chapter 40

1

**Characterization.** Pip once believed his individual worth depended on his wealth. Now striving for money is equated with disease; his “heart” would “be sickened” by it.

2

That friendship is more redeeming than idealized, illusionary, romantic love is important **theme**. Pip recognizes his need for Herbert’s friendship.

3

Pip expects to devote all his thoughts to Magwitch.

4

*Is it odd that Herbert should call wife “dear little thing”? Why or why not?* Responses will vary. In Dickens’ time, women were considered inferior to men.

keeping him in ignorance of the fate of his wealth. Mr. Jaggers was angry with me for having “let it slip through my fingers,” and said we must try at all events for some of it. But he did not conceal from me that although there might be many cases in which forfeiture would not be exacted, there were no circumstances in this case to make it one of them. I understood that very well. I was not related to the outlaw, or connected with him by any recognizable tie. I had no claim, and I resolved that my heart should never be sickened with the hopeless task of attempting to establish one.

There appeared to be reason for supposing that the drowned informer had hoped for a reward, and had obtained some accurate knowledge of Magwitch’s affairs. When his body was found, many miles from the scene of his death, notes were still legible, folded in a case he carried. Among these were the name of a banking house in New South Wales where a sum of money was, and the designation of certain lands of considerable value. Both those heads of information were in a list that Magwitch, while in prison, gave to Mr. Jaggers, of the possessions he supposed I should inherit. His ignorance, poor fellow, at last served him; he never mistrusted but that my inheritance was quite safe, with Mr. Jaggers’ aid.

After three days’ delay, he was committed to take his trial at the next session, which would come on in a month.

It was at this dark time of my life that Herbert returned home one evening, a good deal cast down, and said:

“My dear Handel, I fear I shall soon have to leave you.”

His partner having prepared me for that, I was less surprised than he thought.

“We shall lose a fine opportunity if I put off going to Cairo, and I am very much afraid I must go, Handel, when you most need me.”

2 “Herbert, I shall always need you, because I

shall always love you; but my need is no greater now than at another time.”

“You will be so lonely.”

3 “I have not leisure to think of that,” said I. “You know that I am always with him to the full extent of the time allowed, and that I should be with him all day long, if I could. And when I come away from him, you know that my thoughts are with him.”

“My dear fellow,” said Herbert, “let the near prospect of our separation be my justification for troubling you about yourself. Have you thought of your future? In this branch house of ours, Handel, we must have a——”

I saw that his delicacy was avoiding the right word, so I said, “A clerk.”

“A clerk. And I hope it is not at all unlikely that he may expand into a partner. Now, Handel—in short, my dear boy, will you come to me? Clara and I have talked about it again and again,” Herbert pursued, “and the dear little thing begged me only this evening to say that if you will live with us when we come together, she will do her best to make you happy.”

I thanked her heartily, and I thanked him heartily, but said I could not yet make sure of joining him.

“But if you thought, Herbert, that you could, without doing any injury to your business, leave the question open for a little while——”

“For any while,” cried Herbert. “Six months, a year!”

“Not so long as that,” said I. “Two or three months at most.”

Herbert was highly delighted when we shook hands on this arrangement, and said he could now take courage to tell me that he believed he must go away at the end of the week.

On the Saturday in that same week, I took my leave of Herbert as he sat on one of the sea-port mail coaches. I then went to my lonely

home—if it deserved the name, for it was now no home to me, and I had no home anywhere.

On the stairs I encountered Wemmick. I had not seen him alone since the disastrous issue of the attempted flight; and he had come, in his private and personal capacity, to say a few words in reference to that failure.

“The late Compeyson,” said Wemmick, “had by little and little got at the bottom of half of the regular business now transacted, and it was from the talk of some of his people in trouble that I heard what I did. I kept my ears open until I heard that he was absent, and I thought that would be the best time for making the attempt. I can only suppose now that it was a part of his policy, as a very clever man, habitually to deceive his own instruments. You don’t blame me, I hope, Mr. Pip? I’m sure I tried to serve you, with all my heart.”

5 “I am as sure of that, Wemmick, as you can be, and I thank you most earnestly for all your interest and friendship.”

I invited Wemmick to come upstairs and refresh himself with a glass of grog before walking to Walworth. He accepted but appeared rather fidgety.

“What do you think of my meaning to take a holiday on Monday, Mr. Pip?”

“Why, I suppose you have not done such a thing these twelve months.”

6 “These twelve years, more likely,” said Wemmick. “Yes. I’m going to take a holiday. More than that; I’m going to take a walk. More than that; I’m going to ask you to take a walk with me. It ain’t a long walk, and it’s an early one. Say it might occupy you (including breakfast on the walk), from eight to twelve. Couldn’t you stretch a point and manage it?”

He had done so much for me that this was very little to do for him. I said I could manage it—would manage it—and he was so very much pleased that I was pleased too.

Punctual to my appointment, I rang at the Castle gate on the Monday morning, and was received by Wemmick himself, who struck me 7 as looking tighter<sup>1</sup> than usual, and having a sleeker hat on.

When we had fortified ourselves with biscuits and were going out for the walk, I was considerably surprised to see Wemmick take up a fishing rod and put it over his shoulder.

8 “Why, we are not going fishing!” said I. “No,” returned Wemmick, “but I like to walk with one.”

I thought this odd; however, I said nothing, and we set off. We went toward Camberwell Green, and when we were thereabouts, Wemmick said suddenly:

“Halloa! Here’s a church!”

There was nothing very surprising in that; but again, I was rather surprised when he said, as if he were animated by a brilliant idea:

9 “Let’s go in!”

We went in, Wemmick leaving his fishing rod in the porch, and looked all round. In the meantime, Wemmick was diving into his coat pockets and getting something out of paper there.

“Halloa!” said he. “Here’s a couple of pair of gloves! Let’s put ’em on!”

As the gloves were white kid gloves, I now began to have my strong suspicions. They were strengthened into certainty when I beheld the Aged enter at a side door, escorting a lady.

“Halloa!” said Wemmick. “Here’s Miss Skiffins! Let’s have a wedding.”

10 The clerk and clergyman then appeared, and true to his notion of seeming to do it all without preparation, I heard Wemmick say to himself as he took something out of his waistcoat pocket before the service began, “Halloa! Here’s a ring!”

I acted in the capacity of best man to the

1. **tighter**: neater.

## 5

**Characterization.** Once again, Pip articulates his recognition of friendship and the value he places on it.

## 6

Wemmick’s circumlocution effectively disguises his plan.

## 7

Wemmick’s appearance creates expectation of unusual event.

## 8

Carrying a fishing pole on walk is odd behavior. Reader wonders what the eccentric Wemmick has in mind.

## 9

This, too, is odd even for Wemmick. Reader should have, like Pip, “strong suspicions.”

## 10

Wemmick has obviously arranged this “surprise wedding” so that he will not have to ask Pip to be his best man.

## 11

Pip pays high price for his pursuit of illusionary love and expectations. "Good" characters, Wemmick, Skiffins, Herbert, and Clara, realize happiness through true love; Pip, ever the observer, is denied this fulfillment.

## Chapter 41

### 1

In Dickens' time, there was no effective treatment for a punctured lung.

### 2

As a result of his capture, his injuries, and the knowledge that he can be of no further use to Pip, Magwitch may have lost will to live.

### 3

**Irony.** Court officers seat Magwitch to allow him to breathe enough "to keep life in him" while, ironically, they are condemning him to die.

### 4

Judge is referring to Magwitch.

bridegroom, while the responsibility of giving the lady away devolved upon the Aged.

"Now, Mr. Pip," said Wemmick, triumphantly shouldering the fishing rod as we came out, "let me ask you whether anybody would suppose this to be a wedding party!"

Breakfast had been ordered at a pleasant little tavern a mile or so away. We had an excellent breakfast, and when anyone declined anything on the table, Wemmick said, "Provided by contract, you know; don't be afraid of it!" I drank to the new couple, drank to the Aged, drank to the Castle, saluted the bride at parting, and made myself as agreeable as I could.

## Chapter 41

*Pip takes final leave of Magwitch.*

He lay in prison very ill during the whole interval between his committal for trial and the coming round of the sessions. He had broken two ribs, they had wounded one of his lungs, and he breathed with great pain and difficulty, which increased daily. Being far too ill to remain in the common prison, he was removed, after the first day or so, into the infirmary. This gave me opportunities of being with him that I could not otherwise have had. And but for his illness he would have been put into irons, for he was regarded as a determined prison breaker, and I know not what else.

Although I saw him every day, it was for only a short time. I do not recollect that I once saw any change in him for the better; he wasted and became slowly weaker and worse day by day from the day when the prison door closed upon him.

When the sessions came round, Mr. Jaggers caused an application to be made for the postponement of his trial and was refused. The

trial came on at once, and when he was put to the bar, he was seated in a chair. No objection was made to my getting close to the dock and holding the hand that he stretched out to me.

The trial was very short and very clear. Such things as could be said for him were said—how he had taken to industrious habits, and had thriven<sup>1</sup> lawfully and reputably. But nothing could unsay the fact that he had returned, and was there in presence of the judge and jury. It was impossible not to try him for that, and do otherwise than find him guilty.

At that time it was the custom (as I learned from my terrible experience of that sessions) to devote a concluding day to the passing of sentences, and to make a finishing effect with the sentence of death. I saw two-and-thirty men and women put before the judge to receive that sentence together. Foremost among the two-and-thirty was he; seated, that he might get breath enough to keep life in him.

Penned in the dock, as I again stood outside it at the corner with his hand in mine, were the two-and-thirty men and women; some defiant, some stricken with terror, some sobbing and weeping, some covering their faces, some staring gloomily about. There had been shrieks from among the women convicts, but they had been stilled, and a hush had succeeded.

Then, the judge addressed them. Among the wretched creatures before him whom he must single out for special address, was one who almost from his infancy had been an offender against the laws; who, after repeated imprisonments and punishments, had been at length sentenced to exile for a term of years; and who, under circumstances of great violence and daring, had made his escape and been resented to exile for life. That miserable man would seem for a time to have become convinced of his errors, when far removed

1. **thriven** (thriv'ən): thrived; succeeded; prospered.





### **VISUAL CONNECTIONS**

#### **Exploring the Subject**

Medical practices were crude, and hospitals, especially prison hospitals, were places of horror in Dickens' time. Point out to students the filth, overpowering darkness, disease, and the general air of hopelessness surrounding the two central characters, Pip and Magwitch.

#### **Ideas for Writing**

Another central focus of this photograph is the man in bed in the background. Note how the single candle illuminates the faces of Pip, Magwitch, and the unknown man. Ask students to imagine themselves as the man in the bed next to Magwitch. What is his story? Request that students write brief monologues describing this man's thoughts. Why is he in the prison infirmary? What does he overhear of Pip's and Magwitch's conversation? What other sounds does he hear? What does he smell? What does the room look like from his point of view? Who was his last visitor, and what was the nature of the visit? Monologues should be shared with the class.

from the scenes of his old offenses, and to have lived a peaceable and honest life. But in a fatal moment, he had quitted his haven of rest and repentance, and had come back to the country where he was proscribed.<sup>2</sup> Being here presently denounced, he had for a time succeeded in evading the officers of justice, but being at length seized while in the act of flight, he had resisted them, and had—he best knew whether by express design, or in the blindness of his hardihood—caused the death of his denouncer, to whom his whole career was known. The appointed punishment for his return to the land that had cast him out being death, he must prepare himself to die.

The sun was striking in at the great windows of the court, through the glittering drops of rain upon the glass, and it made a broad shaft of light between the two-and-thirty and the judge. Rising for a moment, a distinct speck of face in this way of light, the prisoner said, “My Lord, I have received my sentence of death from the Almighty, but I bow to yours,” and sat down again.

I began that night to write out a petition to the Home Secretary of State, setting forth my knowledge of him and how it was that he had come back for my sake. I wrote as fervently and pathetically as I could, and when I had finished it and sent it in, I wrote out other petitions to such men in authority as I hoped were the most merciful, and drew up one to the Crown itself. For several days and nights after he was sentenced I took no rest, except when I fell asleep in my chair, but was wholly absorbed in these appeals. The daily visits I could make him were shortened now, and he was more strictly kept. Nobody was hard with him or with me. There was duty to be done, and it was done, but not harshly. Sometimes he was almost unable to speak; then, he would answer

me with slight pressures on my hand, and I grew to understand his meaning very well.

The number of days had risen to ten, when I saw a greater change in him than I had seen yet. His eyes were turned toward the door, and lighted up as I entered.

“Dear boy,” he said, as I sat down by his bed, “I thought you was late. But I knowed you couldn’t be that.”

“It is just the time,” said I. “I waited for it at the gate.”

“You always waits at the gate; don’t you, dear boy?”

“Yes. Not to lose a moment of the time.”

“Thank’ee dear boy, thank’ee. God bless you! You’ve never deserted me, dear boy.”

I pressed his hand in silence, for I could not forget that I had once meant to desert him.

“And what’s the best of all,” he said, “you’ve been more comfortable alonger me since I was under a dark cloud, than when the sun shone. That’s best of all.”

He lay on his back, breathing with great difficulty. Do what he would, and love me though he did, the light left his face ever and again, and a film came over the placid look at the white ceiling.

“Are you in much pain today?”

“I don’t complain of none, dear boy.”

“You never do complain.”

He had spoken his last words. He smiled, and I understood his touch to mean that he wished to lift my hand, and lay it on his breast. I laid it there, and he smiled again, and put both his hands upon it.

The allotted time ran out while we were thus; but, looking round, I found the governor of the prison standing near me, and he whispered, “You needn’t go yet.” I thanked him gratefully, and asked, “Might I speak to him, if he can hear me?”

The governor stepped aside and beckoned the officer away. The change, though it was

**5** Magwitch knows he will die regardless of the judge’s decision.

**6** **Irony.** Although Pip never actually deserted Magwitch, he has often wished to do so.

**7** Magwitch, after lifetime of hardship and betrayal, is especially grateful for Pip’s faithfulness.

**8** **What is implied by this description of Magwitch’s face?** Responses will vary. Most will say that Magwitch’s life is flickering and fading away.

**9** Prison governor’s relaxation of usually strict rules is humane response to Pip’s and Magwitch’s needs.

**2. proscribed:** banished.

made without noise, drew back the film from the placid look at the white ceiling, and he looked most affectionately at me.

"Dear Magwitch, I must tell you, now, at last. You understand what I say?"

A gentle pressure on my hand.

10 "You had a child once, whom you loved and lost."

A stronger pressure on my hand.

"She lived and found powerful friends. She is living now. She is a lady and very beautiful. And I love her!"

With a last faint effort, which would have been powerless but for my yielding to it, and assisting it, he raised my hands to his lips. Then he gently let it sink upon his breast again, with his own hands lying on it. The placid look at the white ceiling came back, and passed away, and his head dropped quietly on his breast.

I thought of the two men who went up into the Temple to pray, and I knew there were no better words that I could say beside his bed than, "O Lord, be merciful to him, a sinner!"<sup>3</sup>

## Chapter 42

*An old friend comes to Pip's rescue.*

Now that I was left wholly to myself, I gave notice of my intention to quit the chambers in the Temple as soon as my tenancy could legally determine, and in the meanwhile to underlet them.<sup>1</sup> I was in debt, and had scarcely any money, and I began to be seriously alarmed by the state of my affairs. Moreover, I was falling very ill. The late stress upon me had enabled

me to put off illness, but not to put it away; I knew that it was coming on me now.

For a day or two I lay on the sofa, or on the floor—anywhere, according as I happened to sink down—with a heavy head and aching limbs, and no purpose, and no power. Then there came one night which appeared of great duration, and which teemed with anxiety and horror; and when in the morning I tried to sit up in my bed and think of it, I found I could not do so. Then I saw two men looking at me.

"What do you want?" I asked, starting. "I don't know you."

"Well, sir," returned one of them, bending down and touching me on the shoulder, "you're arrested."

"What is the debt?"

"Hundred and twenty-three pound, fifteen, six. Jeweler's account, I think."

I made some attempt to get up and dress myself. When I next attended to them, they were standing a little off from the bed, looking 2 at me. I still lay there.

"You see my state," said I. "I would come with you if I could; but indeed I am quite unable. If you take me from here, I think I shall die by the way."

As they hang in my memory by only this one slender thread, I don't know what they did, except that they forbore to<sup>2</sup> remove me.

3 That I had a fever and was avoided, that I suffered greatly, I know of my own remembrance, and did in some sort know at the time. I was delirious and sometimes struggled with real people, in the belief that they were murderers, but above all, I knew that there was a constant tendency in all these people to settle down into the likeness of Joe.

After I had turned the worst point of my illness, I opened my eyes in the night, and I saw in the great chair at the bedside, Joe. I opened

2. **forbore to:** refrained from; did not.

## 10

To ease Magwitch's death, Pip tells him about Estella, withholding information that Magwitch would find upsetting.

## Chapter 42

### 1

People often fall ill after emotional or spiritual trauma. Pip has endured much. He has been burned at Satis and captured by Orlick. Magwitch's attempted escape, subsequent incarceration, and death were emotionally and physically draining.

### 2

Pip fainted from effort of getting up; he is very ill.

### 3

Infectious illnesses were very serious in Dickens' time. Antibiotics and sterilization techniques were nonexistent. To go near sick person was to risk one's life.

3. "O Lord, . . . sinner!": From Luke 18:10.

1. I gave . . . them: Pip gave notice that he would leave his apartment as soon as his lease could be terminated and in the meantime would sublet the rooms.



4  
Pip thinks he is only imagining Joe's presence.

5  
**Characterization.** Pip's guilt over his neglect of Joe causes him to feel he deserves only Joe's disapproval.

6  
**Why are Joe's eyes red? What has caused his mood?** Joe has been crying. Tears are sign of joy, relief because Pip is conscious.

7  
**Characterization.** Joe takes honest pride in a real skill. He is willing to learn and improve himself.

8  
Joe is saying, in roundabout way, that Miss Havisham is dead, but to Joe no one is ever really dead as long as the living remember them.

my eyes in the day, and, sitting on the window seat, smoking his pipe in the shaded open window, still I saw Joe. I asked for cooling drink, and the dear hand that gave it me was Joe's. I sank back on my pillow after drinking, and the face that looked so hopefully and tenderly upon me was the face of Joe.

At last one day I took courage, and said. "Is it Joe?"

And the dear old home voice answered, "Which it air, old chap."

5 "Oh, Joe, you break my heart! Look angry at me, Joe. Strike me, Joe. Tell me of my ingratitude. Don't be so good to me!"

For Joe had actually laid his head down on the pillow at my side and put his arm round my neck, in his joy that I knew him.

"Which dear old Pip, old chap," said Joe, "you and me was ever friends. And when you're well enough to go out for a ride—what larks!"

After which, Joe withdrew to the window and stood with his back toward me, wiping his eyes. And as my extreme weakness prevented me from getting up and going to him, I lay there, penitently whispering, "O God, bless him! O God, bless this gentle Christian man!"

6 Joe's eyes were red when I next found him beside me, but I was holding his hand and we both felt happy.

"Have you been here all the time, dear Joe?"

"Pretty nigh, old chap. For, as I says to Biddy when the news of your being ill were brought by letter, you might be amongst strangers, and you and me having been ever friends, a wisit at such a moment might not prove unacceptable. And Biddy, her word were, 'Go to him, without loss of time.'" There Joe cut himself off short, and informed me I was to be talked to in great moderation. So I lay quiet while he proceeded to indite a note to Biddy, with my love in it.

Evidently Biddy had taught Joe to write. As

7 I lay in bed looking at him, it made me, in my weak state, cry with pleasure to see the pride with which he set about his letter. He got on very well indeed, and when he had signed his name, he got up and hovered about the table, trying the effect of his performance from various points of view, with unbounded satisfaction.

Not to make Joe uneasy by talking too much, even if I had been able to talk much, I deferred asking him about Miss Havisham until next day. He shook his head when I then asked him if she had recovered.

"Is she dead, Joe?"

8 "Why, you see, old chap," said Joe, by way of getting at it by degrees, "I wouldn't go so far as to say that, for that's a deal to say; but she ain't living."

"Did she linger long, Joe?"

"Arter you was took ill, pretty much about what you might call a week," said Joe, still determined, on my account, to come at everything by degrees.

"Dear Joe, have you heard what becomes of her property?"

"Well, old chap," said Joe, "it do appear that she had settled the most of it on Miss Estella. But she had wrote out a little coddleshell<sup>3</sup> in her own hand a day or two afore the accident, leaving a cool four thousand to Mr. Matthew Pocket. And why do you suppose, above all things, Pip, she left that cool four thousand unto him? 'Cause of Pip's account of him, the said Matthew.' I am told by Biddy, that air the writing," said Joe.

This account gave me great joy, as it perfected the only good thing I had done. I asked Joe whether any of the other relations had any legacies.

"Miss Sarah," said Joe, "she has twenty-five

3. **coddleshell:** Joe means *codicil* (kōd'ə-sīl), an item of instruction added to a will.

pound perannium fur to buy pills. Miss Georgiana, she has twenty, Mrs.—what's the name of them wild beasts with humps?"

"Camels?" said I, wondering why he could want to know.

Joe nodded. "Mrs. Camels," by which I understood he meant Camilla, "she have five pounds fur to buy rushlights to put her in spir-  
13 its when she wake up in the night. And now," said Joe, "you can take in one more shovelful today. Old Orlick he's been a-bustin' open a dwelling 'ouse."

"Whose?" said I.

"Not, I grant you, but what his manners is given to blusterous. Still, an Englishman's 'ouse is his castle, and castles must not be busted 'cept when done in wartime. And wotsume'er the failings on his part, he were a corn and seedsman in his heart."

"Is it Pumblechook's house that has been broken into, then?"

10 "That's it, Pip," said Joe, "and they took his till, and they took his cashbox, and they dranked his wine, and they partook of his wittles, and they slapped his face, and they pulled his nose, and they tied him up to his bedpust, and they stuffed his mouth full of flowering annuals to perwent his crying out. But he knowed Orlick, and Orlick's in the county jail."

By these approaches we arrived at unrestricted conversation. I was slow to gain strength, but I did slowly and surely become less weak, and Joe stayed with me, and I fancied I was little Pip again.

11 For the tenderness of Joe was so beautifully proportioned to my need that I was like a child in his hands. He would sit and talk to me in the old confidence, and with the old simplicity, and  
12 in the old unassertive protecting way, so that I would half believe that all my life since the days of the old kitchen was one of the mental troubles of the fever that was gone.

We looked forward to the day when I should go out for a ride. And when the day came and an open carriage was got into the lane, Joe wrapped me up, took me in his arms, and carried me down to it, as if I were still the small helpless creature to whom he had so abundantly given of the wealth of his great nature.

13 When we got back again and he carried me across the court and up the stairs, I thought of that eventful Christmas Day when he had carried me over the marshes. We had not yet made any allusion to my change of fortune, nor did I know how much of my late history he was acquainted with.

"Have you heard, Joe," I asked him that evening, as he smoked his pipe at the window, "who my patron was?"

"I heered," returned Joe, "as it were not Miss Havisham, old chap."

"Did you hear who it was, Joe?"

"Well! I heered as it were a person what sent the person what give you the bank notes at the Jolly Bargemen, Pip."

"So it was."

"Astonishing!" said Joe, in the placidest way.

"Did you hear that he was dead, Joe?"

"Which? Him as sent the bank notes, Pip?"

"Yes."

"I think," said Joe, after meditating a long time, and looking rather evasively at the window seat, "as I *did* hear tell that how he were something or another in a general way in that direction."

"Did you hear anything of his circumstances, Joe?"

"Not partickler, Pip."

"If you would like to hear, Joe—" I was beginning, when Joe got up and came to my sofa.

"Look'ee here, old chap," said Joe, bending over me. "Ever the best of friends; ain't us, Pip?"

I was ashamed to answer him.

9

*Why did Miss Havisham give these odd sums to her relatives?* Responses will vary. She probably meant to ridicule them; they hoped to get her money. By giving them small amounts, she has pointed out their superficiality.

10

Pompous Pumblechook has received his comeuppance; Orlick is in jail, no longer a threat to Pip.

11

Pip is recovering physically and spiritually. His old, kind friend Joe comforts him during recovery. Passage highlights theme that friendship and love are healing.

12

Pip would like to be able to dismiss much of his life as hallucination caused by fever.

13

Joe uses his great strength to carry Pip as easily and gently as he did when Pip was a child.

## VISUAL CONNECTIONS

### Ideas for Writing

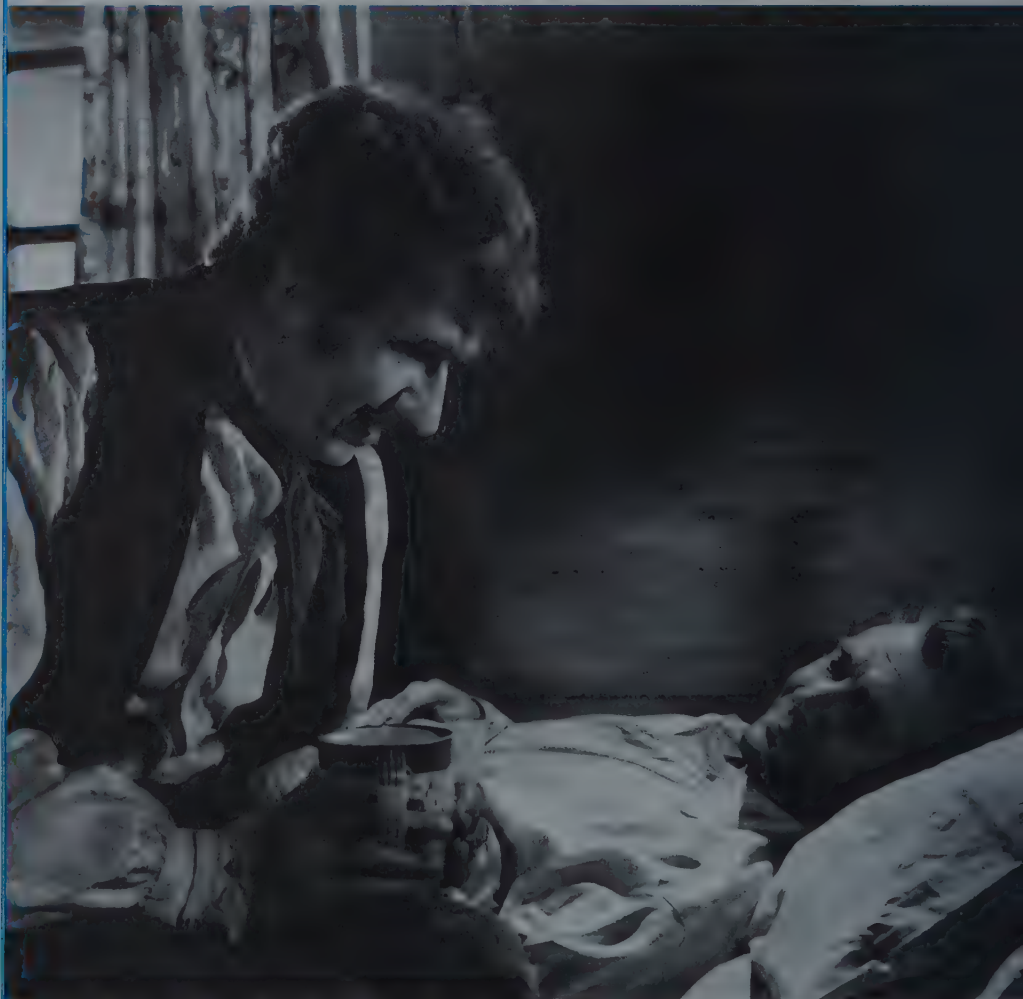
Have students write essays in which they compare this picture to the picture of Pip comforting Magwitch (p. 819). How does Joe's attitude toward Pip in this photograph contrast with Pip's attitude toward Magwitch? How are the illnesses comparable? How do the settings—dark, dank prison infirmary and Pip's well-lit and clean bedroom—suggest differences?

### Relating Expression Skills

Background music is a subtle but important part of the atmosphere of a movie. Ask students interested in music to compose and play or select and record music appropriate to capture the atmosphere and mood of this scene. Each presentation should last about five minutes.

14

**Simile.** Collapse of Pip's expectations compared to dissipation of marsh mist. Marsh mists previously used to create mysterious, dangerous atmosphere. Sun and other light images often represent knowledge or truth. Implication here is that Pip's dangerous expectations (mist) have been dissolved by truth and knowledge (sun).



"Wery good, then," said Joe, as if I *had* answered, "that's all right; that's agreed upon. Then why go into subjects, old chap, which as betwixt two sech must be forever onnecessary?"

The delicacy with which Joe dismissed this

theme made a deep impression on my mind. But whether Joe knew how poor I was, and how my great expectations had all dissolved, like our own marsh mists before the sun, I could not understand.

Another thing in Joe that I could not under-



stand when it first began to develop itself, was this. As I became stronger and better, Joe became a little less easy with me. In my weakness and entire dependence on him, the dear fellow had fallen into the old tone, and called me by the old names, the dear "old Pip, old chap," that now were music in my ears. I too had fallen into the old ways, only happy and thankful that he let me. But imperceptibly, though I held by them fast, Joe's hold upon them began to slacken; and I soon began to understand that the fault of it was all mine.

It was on the third or fourth occasion of my going out walking that I saw this change in him very plainly. We had been sitting in the bright warm sunlight, looking at the river, and I chanced to say as we got up:

"See, Joe! I can walk quite strongly. Now, you shall see me walk back by myself."

"Do not overdo it, Pip," said Joe; "but I shall  
**15** be happy fur to see you able, sir."

The last word grated on me; but how could I remonstrate! I walked no farther than the gate of the gardens, and then pretended to be weaker than I was, and asked Joe for his arm. Joe gave it me, but was thoughtful.

**16** I, for my part, was thoughtful too. I was ashamed to tell him exactly how I was placed. He would want to help me out of his little savings, I knew, and I knew that he ought not to help me, and that I must not suffer him to do it.

It was a thoughtful evening with both of us. Before we went to bed, I had resolved that I would wait over tomorrow, tomorrow being Sunday, and would begin my new course with the new week. On Monday morning I would speak to Joe and tell him what I had in my thoughts.

We had a quiet day on the Sunday, and we rode out into the country, and then walked in the fields. At night, when I had gone to bed, Joe came into my room as he had done all

through my recovery. He asked me if I felt sure that I was as well as in the morning.

"Yes, dear Joe, quite."

"And are always a-getting stronger, old chap?"

"Yes, dear Joe, steadily."

Joe patted the coverlet on my shoulder with his great good hand and said, in what I  
**17** thought a husky voice, "Good night!"

When I got up in the morning, refreshed and stronger yet, I was full of my resolution to tell Joe all, without delay. I went to his room, and he was not there. Not only was he not there, but his box was gone.

I hurried then to the breakfast table and on it found a letter. These were its brief contents.

**18** Not wishful to intrude I have departed fur you are well again dear Pip and will do better without

Jo.

P.S. Ever the best of friends.

Enclosed in the letter was a receipt for the debt and costs on which I had been arrested.

**19** Down to that moment I had vainly supposed that my creditor had withdrawn until I should be quite recovered. I had never dreamed of Joe's having paid the money; but Joe had paid it, and the receipt was in his name.

What remained for me now, but to follow him to the dear old forge and there to have out my disclosure to him, and my penitent remonstrance with him, and there to relieve my mind and heart of another idea, which had begun as a vague something lingering in my thoughts and had formed into a settled purpose.

The purpose was that I would go to Biddy, that I would show her how humbled and repentant I came back, that I would tell her how I had lost all I once hoped for. Then I would say to her, "Biddy, I think you once liked me

**15**

*What is it about Joe's manner of speaking that reflects his attitude towards the nearly recovered Pip? What might account for Joe's change?* Joe refers to Pip as he did when he visited Pip in London. While ill, Pip becomes like child, totally dependent on Joe. Now that he is nearly well, Joe feels that Pip is once again adult gentleman and above Joe's station in life.

**16**

Joe not only knows already about Pip's debts but also has paid them out of his own pocket.

**17**

Joe's words recall Magwitch's preference for saying "Good night" rather than "Good-bye." In fact, Joe is saying "Good-bye," which accounts for huskiness in his voice.

**18**

*Characterization.* Joe's note illustrates his genuine love for Pip and his willingness to sacrifice in Pip's best interest.

**19**

Pip assumed that creditors awaited his recovery, not knowing that Joe, in his great kindness, had paid debt, without any desire for recognition.

20

Pip has changed greatly, now wants to marry because he recognizes reality and value of their love for each other.

## Chapter 43

1

Pip, at peace with himself, does not need trappings of wealth to enjoy untroubled sleep.

2

Pip associates Satis House with arrogance and dishonesty.

3

*What does the description of the day suggest?* Responses will vary. Blue skylarks and green corn create atmosphere of hope and renewal, appropriate mood for spiritual rebirth of Pip.

4

*Allusion.* Suggests Biblical story of Prodigal Son, in which child is welcomed home after spending his inheritance wastefully.

very well, when my errant heart, even while it strayed away from you, was quieter and better with you than it ever has been since. If you can like me only half as well once more, if you can take me with all my faults and disappointments on my head, if you can receive me like a forgiven child, I hope I am a little worthier of you than I was—not much, but a little. And Biddy, it shall rest with you to say whether I shall work at the forge with Joe, or whether I shall try for any different occupation down in this country, or whether we shall go away to a distant place where an opportunity awaits me which I set aside when it was offered, until I knew your answer. And now, dear Biddy, if you can tell me that you will go through the world with me, you will surely make it a better world for me, and me a better man for it, and I will try hard to make it a better world for you.”

Such was my purpose. After three days more of recovery, I went down to the old place, to put it in execution. And how I sped in it is all I have left to tell.

## Chapter 43

*Biddy and Joe have news for Pip.*

The tidings of my high fortunes having had a heavy fall had got down to my native place and its neighborhood before I got there. I found the Blue Boar in possession of the intelligence, and I found that it made a great change in the Boar’s demeanor.

It was evening when I arrived, much fatigued by the journey. The Boar could not put me into my usual bedroom, which was engaged (probably by someone who had expectations), and could only assign me a very indifferent chamber among the pigeons. But I had as sound a sleep and the quality of my dreams was about the same as in the best bedroom.

Early in the morning I strolled round by Satis House. There were printed bills on the gate announcing a sale by auction of the household furniture and effects next week. The house itself was to be sold as old building materials, and pulled down. The ivy had been torn down, and much of it trailed low in the dust and was withered already. Stepping in for a moment at the open gate and looking around me with the uncomfortable air of a stranger who had no business there, I saw the auctioneer’s clerk walking on the casks and telling them off for the information of a catalogue compiler, pen in hand, who made a temporary desk of the wheeled chair I had so often pushed along.

It was the pleasanter to turn to Biddy and to Joe. I went toward them slowly, for my limbs were weak, but with a sense of increasing relief as I drew nearer to them, and a sense of leaving arrogance and untruthfulness farther and farther behind.

The June weather was delicious. The sky was blue, the larks were soaring high over the green corn. I thought all that countryside more beautiful and peaceful by far than I had ever known it to be yet. Many pleasant pictures of the life that I would lead there, and of the change for the better that would come over my character when I had a guiding spirit at my side whose simple faith and clear home wisdom I had proved, beguiled my way. They awakened a tender emotion in me, for my heart was softened by my return, and such a change had come to pass that I felt like one who was toiling home barefoot from distant travel, and whose wanderings had lasted many years.

The schoolhouse where Biddy was mistress, I had never seen, but the little round-about lane by which I entered the village for quietness’ sake took me past it. I was disappointed to find that the day was a holiday, no children

were there, and Biddy's house was closed. Some hopeful notion of seeing her, busily engaged in her daily duties, before she saw me, had been in my mind and was defeated.

5 But the forge was a very short distance off, and I went toward it under the sweet green limes, listening for the clink of Joe's hammer. But the clink of Joe's hammer was not in the midsummer wind.

Almost fearing without knowing why to come in view of the forge, I saw it at last, and saw that it was closed. No gleam of fire, no glittering shower of sparks, no roar of bellows; all shut up, and still.

But the house was not deserted, and the best parlor seemed to be in use, for there were white curtains fluttering in its window, and the window was open and gay with flowers. I went softly toward it, meaning to peek over the flowers, when Joe and Biddy stood before me, arm in arm.

At first Biddy gave a cry, as if she thought it was my apparition, but in another moment she was in my embrace. I wept to see her, and she wept to see me; I, because she looked so fresh and pleasant; she, because I looked so worn and white.

"But, dear Biddy, how smart you look!"

"Yes, dear Pip."

"And Joe, how smart *you* look!"

"Yes, dear old Pip, old chap."

I looked at both of them, from one to the other, and then—

6 "It's my wedding day," cried Biddy, in a burst of happiness, "and I am married to Joe!"

They had taken me into the kitchen, and I had laid my head down on the old deal table. Biddy held one of my hands to her lips, and Joe's restoring touch was on my shoulder. "Which he warn't strong enough, my dear, to be surprised," said Joe. And Biddy said, "I ought to have thought of it, dear Joe, but I was too happy." They were both so overjoyed to

see me, so proud to see me, so touched by my coming to them, so delighted that I should have come by accident to make their day complete!

7 My first thought was one of great thankfulness that I had never breathed this last baffled hope to Joe. How often, while he was with me in my illness, had it risen to my lips.

"Dear Biddy," said I, "you have the best husband in the whole world, and if you could have seen him by my bed you would have—But no, you couldn't love him better than you do."

"No, I couldn't indeed," said Biddy.

"And, dear Joe, you have the best wife in the whole world, and she will make you as happy as even you deserve to be, you dear, good, noble Joe!"

Joe looked at me with a quivering lip, and fairly put his sleeve before his eyes.

"And Joe and Biddy both, receive my humble thanks for all you have done for me, and all I have so ill repaid! And when I say that I am going away within the hour, for I am soon going abroad, and I shall never rest until I have worked for the money with which you have kept me out of prison, and have sent it to you, don't think, dear Joe and Biddy, that if I could repay it a thousand times over, I suppose I could cancel a farthing of the debt I owe you, or that I would do so if I could!"

They were both melted by these words, and both entreated me to say no more.

8 "But I must say more. Dear Joe, I hope you will have children to love, and that some little fellow will sit in this chimney corner of a winter night who may remind you of another little fellow gone out of it forever. Don't tell him, Joe, that I was thankless; don't tell him, Biddy, that I was ungenerous and unjust; only tell him that I honored you both, because you were both so good and true, and that, as your child, I said it would be natural to him to grow up a much better man than I did."

5

**Foreshadowing.** Unusual circumstance is hint that Pip's plans may go awry.

6

Pip has recovered from failure of his expectations but continues to be frustrated in love. Again he observes emotional fulfillment but does not experience it himself.

7

**Baffled:** frustrated, disappointed.

8

**Characterization.** Pip is loving and generous, wishes for Joe what he had hoped for himself. Confession of his faults underscores his new maturity.



9

After confessing his faults, Pip asks for forgiveness.

10

**Resolution.** Pip has returned to his beginnings and is at last at peace with them.

11

Pip takes responsibility for his life and is happy for first time in many years.

12

Pip has lost his old habit of preferring dreams to reality.

13

**Characterization.** Not only has he changed, but also he is totally aware of his own transformation. Example of dynamic character.

## Chapter 44

1

Child is fulfillment of Pip's wish for Joe and Biddy.

"I ain't a-going," said Joe, from behind his sleeve, "to tell him nothink o' that natur, Pip. Nor Biddy ain't."

9 "And now, though I know you have already done it in your own kind hearts, pray tell me, both, that you forgive me! Pray let me hear you say the words, that I may carry the sound of them away with me, and then I shall be able to believe that you can trust me, and think better of me, in the time to come!"

"Oh, dear old Pip, old chap," said Joe. "God knows as I forgive you, if I have anythink to forgive!"

"Amen! And God knows I do!" echoed Biddy.

10 "Now let me go up and look at my old little room and rest there a few minutes by myself. And then when I have eaten and drunk with you, go with me as far as the fingerpost,<sup>1</sup> dear Joe and Biddy, before we say goodbye!"

I sold all I had, and put aside as much as I could for my creditors—who gave me ample time to pay them in full—and I went out and joined Herbert. Within a month, I had quitted England, and within two months I was clerk to Clarriker and Co., and within four months I assumed my first undivided responsibility. For the beam across the parlor ceiling at Mill Pond Bank had then ceased to tremble under the old purser's growls and was at peace, and Herbert had gone away to marry Clara, and I was left in sole charge of the Eastern Branch until he brought her back.

11 Many a year went round before I was a partner in the house; but I lived happily with Herbert and his wife, and lived frugally, and paid my debts, and maintained a constant correspondence with Biddy and Joe. It was not until I became third in the firm that Clarriker betrayed me to Herbert; but he then declared

1. **fingerpost:** a signpost, often shaped like a pointing hand or finger.

that the secret of Herbert's partnership had been long enough upon his conscience, and he must tell it. So he told it, and Herbert was as much moved as amazed, and the dear fellow and I were not the worse friends for the long concealment. I must not leave it to be supposed that we were ever a great house, or that we made mints of money. We were not in a grand way of business, but we had a good name, and worked for our profits, and did very well. We owed so much to Herbert's ever cheerful industry and readiness that I often wondered how I had conceived that old idea of his inaptitude, until I was one day enlightened by the reflection that perhaps the inaptitude had never been in him at all, but had been in me.

## Chapter 44

*Pip and Estella meet again.*

For eleven years I had not seen Joe nor Biddy when, upon an evening in December, an hour or two after dark, I laid my hand softly on the latch of the old kitchen door. I touched it so softly that I was not heard, and I looked in unseen. There, smoking his pipe in the old place by the kitchen firelight, as hale and as strong as ever, though a little gray, sat Joe; and there, fenced into the corner with Joe's leg, and sitting on my own little stool looking at the fire, I was—I again!

"We giv' him the name of Pip for your sake, dear old chap," said Joe, delighted when I took another stool by the child's side, "and we hoped he might grow a little bit like you, and we think he do."

I thought so too, and I took him out for a walk next morning, and we talked immensely, understanding one another to perfection. And I took him down to the churchyard, and set

him on a certain tombstone there, and he showed me from that elevation which stone was sacred to the memory of Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and Also Georgiana, Wife of the Above.

"Biddy," said I, when I talked with her after dinner, as her little girl lay sleeping in her lap, "you must give Pip to me, one of these days; or lend him, at all events."

"No, no," said Biddy gently. "You must marry."

"So Herbert and Clara say, but I don't think I shall, Biddy. I have so settled down in their home that it's not at all likely. I am already quite an old bachelor."

Biddy looked down at her child, and put its little hand to her lips, and then put the good matronly hand with which she had touched it into mine. There was something in the action and in the light pressure of Biddy's wedding ring that had a very pretty eloquence in it.

3 "Dear Pip," said Biddy, "you are sure you don't fret for her?"

"Oh, no—I think not, Biddy."

"Tell me as an old friend. Have you quite forgotten her?"

"My dear Biddy, I have forgotten nothing in my life that ever had a foremost place there, and little that ever had any place there. But that poor dream, as I once used to call it, has all gone by, Biddy, all gone by!"

*Dickens originally wrote only two more paragraphs to end the story, but because so many of his friends were dissatisfied with the conclusion, he re-wrote the final paragraphs of the novel to read as follows. You will find the original ending on page 830.*

Nevertheless, I knew while I said those words that I secretly intended to revisit the site of the old house that evening, alone, for her sake. Yes, even so. For Estella's sake.

4 I had heard of her as leading a most un-

happy life, and as being separated from her husband, who had used her with great cruelty, and who had become quite renowned as a compound of pride, avarice, brutality, and meanness. And I had heard of the death of her husband, from an accident consequent on his ill treatment of a horse. This release had befallen her some two years before; for anything I knew she was married again.

5 The early dinner hour at Joe's left me time to walk over to the old spot before dark. There was no house now, no brewery, no building whatever left, but the wall of the old garden. The cleared space had been enclosed with a rough fence, and looking over it, I saw that some of the old ivy had struck root anew and was growing green on low quiet mounds of ruin. A gate in the fence standing ajar, I pushed it open and went in.

A cold silvery mist had veiled the afternoon, and the moon was not yet up to scatter it. But the stars were shining beyond the mist, and the moon was coming, and the evening was not dark. I could trace out where every part of the old house had been and was looking along the desolate garden walk, when I beheld a solitary figure in it.

The figure showed itself aware of me as I advanced. It had been moving toward me, but it stood still. As I drew nearer, I saw it to be the figure of a woman. Then, it faltered as if much surprised, and uttered my name, and I cried out:

"Estella!"

"I am greatly changed. I wonder you know me."

6 The freshness of her beauty was indeed gone, but its majesty and its charm remained. Those attractions in it, I had seen before; what I had never seen before was the saddened softened light of the once proud eyes; what I had never felt before was the friendly touch of the once insensible hand.

2

**Why is it important that young Pip know where old Pip's parents are buried?** Responses will vary. Joe and Biddy have told their son the history of his name. Pip shares his roots with child because Young Pip may be as close as Pip will come to having an heir.

3

**To whom is Biddy referring?** Pip's old love, Estella.

4

Estella's marriage to Drummle failed miserably. Bred by Miss Havisham to be heartless and to break hearts, Estella's life is tragic.

5

**Symbol.** Decayed garden, which earlier represented emotional barrenness of Miss Havisham and Estella, has been cleared. Remnant of old ivy begins new growth in ruins, symbolizing rebirth. Like the ivy, Pip, too, has begun a new life from the wreckage of his old one.

6

Estella has undergone radical transformation since she and Pip last saw each other.

7

**Is this coincidental meeting believable?** Responses will vary. This is not the original ending. Central event of this ending, that Pip and Estella “get together,” may be hard to believe.

8

Pip is thinking of his last words with Magwitch, when he told him that he loved his lost daughter (p. 821). Magwitch pressed Pip’s hand because he was pleased to know that Pip loved her.

9

**Symbol.** Estella’s loss of property, like Pip’s, symbolizes spiritual loss and disillusionment—loss of “expectations.”

10

**What does last paragraph of this ending mean?** Transformed by lives they have lived, Pip and Estella will stay together.

We sat down on a bench that was near, and I said, “After so many years, it is strange that we should thus meet again, Estella, here where our first meeting was! Do you often come back?”

“I have never been here since.”

7 “Nor I.”

The moon began to rise, and I thought of the placid look at the white ceiling, which had passed away. The moon began to rise, and I thought of the pressure on my hand when I had spoken the last words he had heard on earth.

Estella was the next to break the silence.

“I have very often hoped and intended to come back, but have been prevented by many circumstances. Poor, poor old place!”

The silvery mist was touched with the first rays of the moonlight, and the same rays touched the tears that dropped from her eyes. Not knowing that I saw them, and setting herself to get the better of them, she said quietly:

“Were you wondering, as you walked along, how it came to be left in this condition?”

“Yes, Estella.”

9 “The ground belongs to me. It is the only possession I have not relinquished. Everything else has gone from me, little by little, but I have kept this. It was the subject of the only determined resistance I made in all the wretched years.”

“Is it to be built on?”

“At last it is. I came here to take leave of it before its change. And you,” she said, in a voice of touching interest to a wanderer, “you live abroad still.”

“Still.”

“And do well, I am sure?”

“I work pretty hard for a sufficient living, and therefore—yes, I do well!”

“I have often thought of you,” said Estella.

“Have you?”

“Of late, very often.”

“You have always held your place in *my* heart,” I answered.

And we were silent again until she spoke.

“I little thought,” said Estella, “that I should take leave of you in taking leave of this spot. I am very glad to do so.”

“Glad to part again, Estella? To me, parting is a painful thing. To me, the remembrance of our last parting has been ever mournful and painful.”

“But you said to me,” returned Estella, very earnestly, “‘God bless you, God forgive you!’ And if you could say that to me then, you will not hesitate to say that to me now—now, when suffering has been stronger than all other teaching, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but—I hope—into a better shape. Be as considerate and good to me as you were, and tell me we are friends.”

“We are friends,” said I, rising and bending over her, as she rose from the bench.

“And will continue friends apart,” said Estella.

10 I took her hand in mine, and we went out of the ruined place; and as the morning mists had risen long ago when I first left the forge, so the evening mists were rising now, and in all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw no shadow of another parting from her.

Great Expectations originally ended with the following two paragraphs. In the original version, the final chapter was the same as the present one, up to the point where Pip tells Biddy, “that poor dream, as I once used to call it, has all gone by, Biddy, all gone by!” (See page 829.) From that point on, the original ending was as follows:

It was two years more before I saw Estella. I had heard of her as leading a most unhappy



## CLOSURE

Ask students to describe how Pip's character has changed in Stage 3. Have these changes made Pip a better person? Why was it necessary for Pip to experience a great deal of pain before he could make these changes?

## EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Some students may be interested in presenting a dramatic reading of a scene from the novel. Some possibilities include the following: Pip and Miss Havisham's conversation in Chapter 35; Orlick and Pip's encounter in Chapter 38; and

Pip and Estella's reunion in Chapter 44.

Students who particularly enjoyed this novel might like to read other Dickens novels: *David Copperfield*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Bleak House*, and *A Christmas Carol*.

life, and as being separated from her husband, who had used her with great cruelty, and who had become quite renowned as a compound of pride, brutality, and meanness. I had heard of the death of her husband from an accident consequent on ill treating a horse, and of her being married again to a Shropshire doctor who, against his interest, had once very manfully interposed on an occasion when he was in professional attendance on Mr. Drummle, and had witnessed some outrageous treatment of her. I had heard that the Shropshire doctor was not rich, and that they lived on her own personal fortune. I was in England again—in London, and walking along Piccadilly with little Pip—when a servant came running after me to ask would I step back to a lady in a carriage who wished to speak to me. It was a little pony carriage which the lady was driving, and the lady and I looked sadly enough on one another.

"I am greatly changed, I know; but I thought you would like to shake hands with Estella, too, Pip. Lift up that pretty child and let me kiss it!" (She supposed the child, I think, to be my child.) I was very glad afterward to have had the interview; for in her face and in her voice, and in her touch, she gave me the assurance that suffering had been stronger than Miss Havisham's teaching, and had given her a heart to understand what my heart used to be.

## Reading Check

1. What are the two names the convict goes by?
2. What plan does Herbert propose for the convict's safety?
3. Who is Compeyson?
4. What does Pip ask Miss Havisham to do for Herbert?
5. What warning does Pip receive from Wemmick when he returns from Satis House?
6. Why does Pip begin to practice rowing?
7. What conclusion does Pip come to about Jaggers' housekeeper?
8. How is Pip injured?
9. What crime does Orlick reveal to Pip?
10. What happens to Pip's inheritance?

## For Study and Discussion

### Analyzing and Interpreting the Novel

#### Characters

1. In the first two stages of the novel, Pip does what other people tell him to do. Which of his actions in Stage 3 show a new independence of spirit?
- 2a. How has Pip changed from the snob he had become? b. What is his new attitude toward those who had been kind to him in the past? c. How is this change shown in Pip's actions toward Magwitch during and after his trial?
- 3a. In the third stage, which of Pip's experiences teach him the value of real friendship and affection? b. In particular, what does he learn from each of the following: meeting

## 11

**Characterization.** Middle-class status of Estella's new husband shows that she does not choose new mate on basis of money, as she did with Drummle. She has changed.

## READING CHECK

1. Provis and Magwitch (p. 778).
2. He proposes to get him out of England (p. 783).
3. He jilted Miss Havisham; is second convict Pip saw (p. 786).
4. Give money for Herbert's partnership (p. 789).
5. Not to go home (p. 790).
6. To disguise escape plans (p. 794).
7. Estella's mother (p. 796).
8. Burned trying to save Miss Havisham (p. 801).
9. Striking Mrs. Joe (p. 807).
10. Forfeited to Crown (p. 815).

## FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION

1. Protects Magwitch and plans escape; tries to protect Estella from Drummle; influences Miss Havisham to help Herbert.
- 2a. Realizes sources of "expectations"; develops appreciation for people. 2b. Feels renewed love for them. 2c. Pip is loyal and loving.
- 3a. Herbert's and Clara's happiness; hearing that Pumblechook poses as his benefactor; Joe's loyalty. 3b. He learns value of real love and friendship.

4. Responses will vary.

5a. Member of lower class, received heavier sentence. 5b. Kills Compeyson but is kind to Pip.

6a. Miss Havisham negative influence, Magwitch positive. 6b. Pip uneducated, Herbert educated; Pip learns Herbert's social graces. 6c. Estella is beautiful, proud, artful, and hardhearted; Clara is warm, loving, innocent, and modest. 6d. Estella enjoys cruelty; Pip is ambitious to win her favor.

7. Estella, Miss Havisham, and Magwitch are dynamic; Jaggers, Orlick, and Herbert are static.

8a. She looks like Estella, was acquitted of murder charges, and had daughter. 8b. She is intent on doing Jaggers' bidding, has strong, scarred hands linking her to murder; hands look like Estella's.

9a. Estella. 9b. With Miss Havisham's half-brother, he conspired to sell her property; also borrowed money from her. 9c. Molly.

10a. Struggle on river, resulting in Compeyson's death and Magwitch's capture. 10b. By placement of mysterious clues: suspicious man on staircase, Orlick's attack on Pip, mysterious galley, and so on.

11a. Responses will vary. 11b. Responses will vary. Both display Estella's softened heart. 11c. He tells Biddy his dream is gone, but opportunities may revive dreams. 11d. Possibly, because she is not responsible for upbringing. 11e. Responses will vary. 11f. Both are more mature and ready for relationship.

12a. Dark and closed; reflects her bitterness and resentment.

12b. Her real life ended when jilted. 12c. She is unhappy and secretive. 12d. Torments herself with reminder that she was to be bride. 12e. Miss Havisham's lost love has been replaced by decay and corruption.

Clara, Herbert's fiancée; hearing the story Pumblechook has told about him; being held prisoner by Orlick; being cared for by Joe?

4. During his last visit to Satis House, Pip says to Estella, "... you cannot choose but remain part of my character, part of the little good in me, part of the evil. But I associate you only with the good, for you must have done me far more good than harm." Do you agree with Pip that Estella has been the source of more good than harm? Explain.

5. Although Magwitch is a criminal, Dickens treats him with compassion, and he emerges as a character of great dignity. a. In what way has Magwitch been the victim of injustice? b. How does Dickens show the good as well as the evil in Magwitch's nature?

6. In *Great Expectations*, there are a number of characters who are **foils**—that is, these characters set each other off by contrast. Biddy and Estella are foils; clearly, the reader is intended to compare their natures and their influence on Pip. a. In what way are Magwitch and Miss Havisham foils? b. Pip and Herbert? c. Estella and Clara? d. Estella and Pip?

7. Characters who do not change in the course of a literary work are **static** characters. Characters who grow and develop are **dynamic** characters. How would you classify the following characters: Estella, Miss Havisham, Jaggers, Orlick, Herbert, Magwitch?

## Plot

8. Dickens' masterful handling of plot and suspense is especially evident in his treatment of Molly. a. What clues does he provide to Molly's real identity? b. How does Molly's behavior, as observed by Pip, help to make Wemmick's story of the past convincing?

9. In this last stage of the novel, the threads of the plot come together as a logical design. a. Whom does Magwitch turn out to be related to? b. How did the other convict, Compeyson, swindle Miss Havisham? c. Who is Estella's mother?

10. The **climax** of a novel is usually the most exciting or dramatic part of the plot, the point at which the conflict is resolved and the outcome of the action decided. a. Which incident would you identify as the climax of *Great Expectations*? b. How does Dickens build suspense as he leads up to the climax?

11a. Which of Dickens' two endings do you prefer? Why? b. Which do you think is most faithful to the nature of the characters involved? c. Does Pip, by the end of the novel, still want to marry Estella? d. Does Estella, because of what she has experienced, deserve to be forgiven by Pip? e. Is it believable that she could have come to love him? f. Do you think these two can still care for each other?

## Setting

12. In a way, Satis House is a symbol of Miss Havisham. a. How has she made it reflect her own state of mind? b. What is suggested by the stopped clocks? c. The dark passageways? d. The yellowed bridal gown? e. When Pip pulls the tablecloth off the table, spiders and beetles run out of the wedding cake. What does this suggest about Miss Havisham's lost love?

## Theme

**13.** Throughout the novel Dickens deals with the contrast between appearance and reality, illusion and substance. After Pip learns who his benefactor is, Mr. Jaggers tells him: "Take nothing on its looks; take everything on evidence. There's no better rule" (page 780). Where in the novel has Pip been influenced by "looks" rather than by "evidence"?

**14.** While ill with fever, Pip realizes that his "great expectations had all dissolved, like our own marsh mists before the sun" (page 824).  
**a.** How is this statement, in a way, a summing-up of all that Pip has learned? **b.** In your own words, state what you think is the overall theme of *Great Expectations*.

## Language and Vocabulary

### Analyzing Words from Latin Roots

Pip's first feeling toward Magwitch is one of *repugnance*—a strong dislike. The word comes from the Latin prefix *re-*, which means "back," and the verb *pugnare*, which means "to fight." From the same root come the words *pugnacious*, *pugilism*, and *impugn*. What does each of these words have to do with the original meaning "to fight"? Use a dictionary to find the answer.

Compeyson had meant to *depose* to the real identity of Magwitch. *Depose* in this sense means "to testify under oath"; a *deposition* is a person's testimony. Both words come from the Latin word *deponere*, which itself is composed of the prefix *de-*, meaning "down" and the verb *ponere*, meaning "to place or put." *Deponere* means "to put down." Tell what meaning the word *depose* has in this sentence: "Richard II was *deposed* by his cousin, Henry Bolingbroke."

**2** How are both meanings of *depose* related to the Latin meaning "to put down"?

► Before students begin this writing assignment, you may want to refer them to the **Writing About Literature** section on p. 838.

In English the root word *ponere* often appears as *pos-*, *pose-*, *pon-*, or *pone-*. Find the meanings of each of the following words by analyzing its structure. Use a dictionary if necessary.

composure	impose	postponement
depository	interpose	purpose

## Writing About Literature

### ► Expressing an Opinion

Write a short paper evaluating *Great Expectations* as a novel. Here are some questions to consider before you begin:

- Was the plot exciting? Did it hold your interest?
- Did you care about the characters and what happened to them?
- Were the characters and actions believable, given the setting and circumstances of the novel?
- Was the ending satisfying?
- Did the novel give you a better understanding of people and of life?

If you wish, devote a single paragraph to each of these questions. Give specific reasons based on events and characters in the novel.

### ► Comparing the Short Story with the Novel

Reading *Great Expectations* has placed before you some examples of the qualities and characteristics of the novel as a "type," in comparison with the short story. The novel generally has more characters, for instance, and their lives can be studied in greater detail than those of the characters in a short story. Whereas the plot of a short story is usually limited to one major action, a novel may have several subplots. Compare elements of the two forms, noting their similarities and differences.

**13.** Impressed by Satis House and Estella instead of true goodness of Joe and Biddy; sickened by Magwitch's appearance though he is true benefactor; thinks Miss Havisham is his benefactor, overlooks her vengefulness and bitterness.

**14.** "Expectations" are often fanciful and illusory. Learning to look at self and life honestly, one can appreciate real values.

## LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

**1. Repugnance:** strong dislike; **pugnacious:** disposed to fight; **pugilism:** boxing; **impugn:** to fight with words.

**2. Deposed** means "to be deprived of throne." Meaning of Latin *deponere*, "to put down," applies equally to use of *depose* in sense of "testify under oath."

**3. Composure:** settled state; **depository:** place where something is kept; **impose:** to lay (something) as duty, tax, etc., or to pass off; **interpose:** to place between; **postponement:** a delay; **purpose:** to act with determination.

## WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

### Expressing an Opinion

As a prewriting activity, students might gather in small groups to discuss the questions posed.

### Comparing the Short Story with the Novel

This is a beneficial assignment for advanced students. You might prepare for writing with rapid review of elements studied in connection with short stories and novel.



## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to demonstrate their ability to examine the relationship between fact and fiction.

## PRESENTATION

You may want to integrate this exercise with the study of *Great Expectations* by recalling for students that one of Pip's main problems was distinguishing between fact and fiction, illusion and reality. You might also remind students to

compare details of **setting**—dirt, rats, and so on—with details from Dickens' *Autobiography* as a beginning for a more general comparison. Finally, an oral reading of this passage may give some students a previously unperceived sense of the passage's **tone**.

# DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

## EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FICTION AND FACT

Students of literature often avoid referring to the biography of writers. They recognize and respect writers' impulse to keep details of their lives separate from their artistic creations. And yet, a novelist's experiences, like Dickens' experiences in the blacking warehouse, are, along with his words and ideas, the materials with which his novels are built. In helping students with this exercise, remind them not only to find parallels between Dickens' experiences and his fiction but also to note the points at which Dickens departs from his experiences, creating new experiences for his characters.

### Answers

1. Responses will vary. Most students will notice that Murdstone and Grinby's warehouse is similar in details to the warehouse where Dickens worked as a child. Beyond this, however, Dickens seems to use the negative emotions he associated with his childhood experience as inspiration for depicting the warehouse as a place of horror. We see this in phrases like "crazy old house," "the evil hour when I went among them," and "Its paneled rooms, discolored with the dirt and smoke of a hundred years."

2. Responses will vary. Dickens relies on his experiences to inspire elements of his fiction, particularly his varied and vivid images and settings.

## Examining the Relationship Between Fiction and Fact

In the selection *Fragments of an Autobiography*, Charles Dickens recalls a painful period in his childhood, when he was put to work in a blacking warehouse. He later used these experiences in his novel *David Copperfield*.

Here is a scene from Chapter 11 of *David Copperfield*, which parallels a number of the facts in Dickens' life. Read this excerpt and then compare it with Dickens' autobiographical account, which appears on pages 264–271.

- 1 How does Dickens make use of his childhood
- 2 memories? What does this passage show about Dickens' methods as a novelist?

I know enough of the world now, to have almost lost the capacity of being much surprised by anything; but it is matter of some surprise to me, even now, that I can have been so easily thrown away at such an age. A child of excellent abilities, and with strong powers of observation, quick, eager, delicate, and soon hurt bodily or mentally, it seems wonderful to me that nobody should have made any sign in my behalf. But none was made; and I became, at ten years old, a little laboring hind in the service of Murdstone and Grinby.

Murdstone and Grinby's warehouse was at the waterside. It was down in Blackfriars. Modern improvements have altered the place; but it was the last house at the bottom of a narrow street, curving down hill to the river, with some stairs at the end, where

people took boat. It was a crazy old house with a wharf of its own, abutting on the water when the tide was in, and on the mud when the tide was out, and literally overrun with rats. Its paneled rooms, discolored with the dirt and smoke of a hundred years, I dare say; its decaying floors and staircase; the squeaking and scuffling of the old gray rats down in the cellars; and the dirt and rottenness of the place; are things, not of many years ago, in my mind, but of the present instant. They are all before me, just as they were in the evil hour when I went among them for the first time, with my trembling hand in Mr. Quinion's.

Murdstone and Grinby's trade was among a good many kinds of people, but an important branch of it was the supply of wines and spirits to certain packet ships. I forget now where they chiefly went, but I think there were some among them that made voyages both to the East and West Indies. I know that a great many empty bottles were one of the consequences of this traffic, and that certain men and boys were employed to examine them against the light, and reject those that were flawed, and to rinse and wash them. When the empty bottles ran short, there were labels to be pasted on full ones, or corks to be fitted to them, or seals to be put upon the corks, or finished bottles to be packed in casks. All this work was my work, and of the boys employed upon it I was one.

## OBJECTIVES

The overall aim is for students to examine several critical interpretations of Dickens' *Great Expectations* in order to support or refute one of them in a short essay.

## PRESENTATION

Because these critics were writing for a sophisticated audience, students may need help understanding the language of the passages. As you read and discuss these quotations in class, define words students might be unfamiliar with, such as

"beneficent," "caste," and "unctuous." In addition, a brief discussion of the nature of literary criticism will help students understand that although critics are highly trained readers, their interpretations are influenced by their own biases and perspectives on ideals, values, litera-

# PRACTICE IN READING AND WRITING

## Responding to an Interpretation

The following quotations represent brief critical comments on certain aspects of *Great Expectations*. After reading these statements of opinion, write a short essay supporting or refuting one of them on the basis of your own interpretation of the novel.

*Great Expectations* is in the first place a fantasy. It is a fantasy of a sort that many children have; perhaps all children have it, and certainly all lonely children, all children who feel too little wanted or appreciated, who feel the powerlessness of childhood. . . . It is a fantasy of sudden translation or sudden transformation, the fantasy of arrival at a point where yearning is magically fulfilled, commonly expressed in such phrases as "when I get rich" or "when my ship comes in." It is a fantasy of a beneficent if unpredictable universe that will someday shower us with gold without any effort or indeed any merit on our part.

Paul Pickerel  
"Great Expectations"

[Dickens'] idea of Pip was . . . a young man who could be interpreted in detail as his character deteriorates under the stimulus of "great" or "undeserved" expectations of wealth and position. Dickens invented a series of events which would let Pip come close to ruin as a person because of his expectations, reach a climax of disappointment when they turn out to be "false" (false in the sense of caste and prestige), achieve maturity

in the experience, then find gradual regeneration by learning to work for proper rewards in life. *Great Expectations* is planned on this concept of character, and all the action revolves around it.

Earle Davis  
*The Flint and the Flame:  
The Artistry of Charles Dickens*

The attitude of Pip toward Magwitch in *Great Expectations* is extremely interesting. Pip is conscious all along of his ingratitude toward Joe, but far less so of his ingratitude toward Magwitch. When he discovers that the person who had loaded him with benefits for years is actually a transported convict, he falls into frenzies of disgust.

George Orwell  
"Charles Dickens"

*Great Expectations* is the perfect expression of a phase of English society: it is a statement, to be taken as it stands, of what money can do, good and bad; of how it can change and make distinctions of class; how it can pervert virtue, sweeten manners, open up new fields of enjoyment and suspicion.

Humphry House  
*The Dickens World*

In "A Debt to Dickens," Pearl Buck tells how her discovery of Dickens' novels affected her life:

He opened my eyes to people, he taught me to love all sorts of people, high and low, rich

## RESPONDING TO AN INTERPRETATION

All five of these excerpts are interpretations of Dickens' work, and yet each is distinctly different from any of the others. The first excerpt, by Paul Pickerel, for instance, tries to make a point about *Great Expectations* as a whole; the second, by Earle Davis, makes a point about a single character, Pip; the third, by George Orwell, narrows the focus even further by analyzing Pip's attitude toward another character, Magwitch; the fourth, by Humphry House, discusses the relationship of *Great Expectations* to society; and the fifth, by Pearl Buck, relates how Dickens' novels personally affected her.

ture, and life. Professional interpretations gain their authority through carefully considered and well-written opinions, but there is nothing absolute about the interpretations themselves.

### Answer

1. Responses will vary. In answering this question, students should make clear whether Dickens has had a positive, educational effect upon them, as on Pearl Buck. They should also answer Buck's reservations about Dickens. Are Dickens' "good" characters too "undiluted"? His "evil" characters too "unmixed"? Do they agree with Buck's characterization of Dickens, that "life rushed out of him strong and clear, full of love and hate"?

and poor, the old and little children. He taught me to hate hypocrisy and pious mouthing of unctuous words. He taught me that beneath gruffness there may be kindness, and that kindness is the sweetest thing in the world, and goodness is the best thing in the world. He taught me to despise money grubbing. People today say he is obvious and sentimental and childish in his analysis of character. It may be so, and yet I have found people surprisingly like those he wrote about—the good a little less undiluted, perhaps, and the evil a little more mixed. And I do not regret that simplicity of his, for it had its own virtue. The virtue was a great zest for life. If he saw everything black and white, it was because life rushed out of him strong and clear, full of love and hate. He gave me that zest, that immense joy in life and in people, and in their variety.

1 Do you think *Great Expectations* bears out this analysis of Dickens' work?



## For Further Reading

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Brontë, Charlotte, *Jane Eyre* (many editions)

Engaged as a governess at Thornfield, Jane Eyre falls in love with her employer, a strange, moody man who harbors a tragic secret.

Buck, Pearl S., *The Good Earth* (many editions)

This story of a peasant family, set in China during the early twentieth century, gives the reader a glimpse into a vanished way of life.

Christie, Agatha, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (Dodd, Mead, 1975; paperback, Bantam; 1987)

Here is the first case solved by Hercule Poirot, Christie's most memorable sleuth.

Cooper, James Fenimore, *The Last of the Mohicans* (many editions)

Natty Bumppo, a frontier scout (also known as Hawkeye), and his Mohican friends Chingachgook and Uncas, are the heroes, and Magua, a renegade Huron, is the villain in this exciting adventure set during the French and Indian War.

Dickens, Charles, *David Copperfield* (many editions)

This novel, the most autobiographical of Dickens' works, is famous for its great character portraits: the impecunious Mr. Micawber, the unctuous Uriah Heep, the eccentric Betsy Trotwood, among others.

Dumas, Alexandre, *The Count of Monte-Cristo* (many editions)

Edmond Dantès, imprisoned on a trumped-up charge, escapes from prison and returns to Marseilles as the Count of Monte-Cristo to carry out his revenge.

Golding, William, *Lord of the Flies* (Coward-McCann, 1962; paperback, Putnam)

When they become stranded on an island after an air crash, a group of English schoolboys revert to primitive behavior.

Hemingway, Ernest, *The Old Man and the Sea* (Scribner, 1952; paperback, Scribner; 1984)

An old fisherman pits his courage and endurance against the sea in a heroic struggle.

Kipling, Rudyard, *Kim* (many editions)

Set in India during the period of British rule, this story tells the adventures of a young orphan, Kimball O'Hara, known as Kim.

Lipsyte, Robert, *The Contender* (Harper & Row, 1967; paperback, Bantam)

A young boy struggles to grow up in Harlem and become a champion boxer.

Nordhoff, Charles, and James Norman Hall, *Mutiny on the Bounty* (Little, Brown, 1932; paperback, Pocket Books)

Based on fact, this narrative tells of the voyage of the *Bounty* to the South Seas in 1787, and of the mutiny against the tyrannical and cruel Captain Bligh.

Richter, Conrad, *The Light in the Forest* (Knopf, 1953; paperback, Bantam)

This novel, which tells of the conflicting loyalties of a white boy raised by Indians, is based on factual records of frontier life in Pennsylvania.

Steinbeck, John, *The Red Pony* (Viking Press, 1959, 1986)

This novel contains four stories about the "coming of age" of Jody Tiflin, a boy who lives on a California ranch.

Stevenson, Robert Louis, *The Black Arrow* (Macmillan, 1962; paperback, Airmont)

This story of adventure, romance, and intrigue takes place in fifteenth-century England during the struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster.

Twain, Mark, *The Prince and the Pauper* (many editions)

Two look-alikes, a royal prince and a pauper's son, exchange clothes and roles in this novel set in sixteenth-century England.

Verne, Jules, *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (many editions)

Aboard his submarine *Nautilus*, Captain Nemo and his crew live in isolation from society, all their needs provided by the riches of the ocean.

### FOR FURTHER READING

All of the books in this list will complement *Great Expectations*. Comparisons of these authors' literary techniques to Dickens' should prove beneficial. You might decide to assign book reports from the works on this list.

These books were published at widely varying points in history. By reading books that were published before or after *Great Expectations*, students will be able to better relate Dickens' work to the evolution of the novel. You might want to create a writing assignment discussing how Dickens changed the art of novel writing, and also how modern novels differ from Victorian novels. Despite the differences in style and structure, however, readers will find that all of these works deal with one or all of the many conflicts and themes found in *Great Expectations*: good and evil, the individual and society, the nature and role of human love, and other concerns of the human condition.

## PRESENTATION

The material in this section has a dual purpose: (1) to strengthen critical thinking skills necessary for understanding and appreciating literary works and (2) to develop writing skills required for the clear and persuasive presentation of ideas

about literature.

Before students read **Developing Skills in Critical Thinking**, the introduction to this section, determine informally how much experience they have had in writing essays about literature. You might ask them to cite the writing assign-

ments they have had. If students are not familiar with the **Guide to Literary Terms and Techniques** (pp. 860–882), you might have students look up some of the terms mentioned.

When presenting **The Writing Process**, you may want to stress evaluating and revising stages

# WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

## Developing Skills in Critical Thinking

Many of the compositions you will be asked to write in English class will be about the literature you read. The writing may be in response to an examination question, a homework assignment, or a research project. At times you may be assigned a topic to work on; at other times you may be instructed to choose your own subject.

In writing about literature, you make an effort to understand and respond to some aspect of a literary work or group of works. For example, you may discuss the conflict that is developed in a short story; you may give your impression of a character in a play or novel; you may compare the images in two poems; you may state the main idea of an essay. Such writing assignments are an important part of literary study, which aims at greater understanding and appreciation of the works you read.

Writing about a literary work is a way of getting to know it better. Before you write a composition about a story, a poem, a play, or a group of works, you must read and reread the material carefully. You must sort out your thoughts, consider the evidence, and reach conclusions. In putting your thoughts down on paper, you become more fully involved with the literature.

Throughout your studies you will become familiar with many elements that are useful in analyzing literary works. You can assume that your readers will understand what you mean when you refer to such elements as *plot*, *conflict*, *symbol*, or *irony*. These words are part of a common vocabulary used in writing about literature. (See the *Guide to Literary Terms and Techniques*, page 860.)

### DEVELOPING SKILLS IN CRITICAL THINKING

**1** *Do you prefer to choose your own topic or to be given a topic? Why?* Responses will vary.

**2** *How do these assignments differ from book reports?* Require writer to analyze work, not write summaries or overall impressions.

**3** In any kind of writing, knowing subject well is essential.

**4** Considering relationship of elements or parts to work as a whole is purpose of literary analysis.

**5** *Which of these terms do you recognize?* Some students may need to review use of literary terms.

of the process. Point out that writers must *evaluate* a draft, identifying its strengths and weaknesses before they can make improvements; writers can *revise* a draft by adding, cutting, reordering, and replacing words, phrases, and sentences. You also may want to point out that

*revising* and *proofreading* differ in intent—*revising* focuses on substantive changes while *proofreading* concentrates on surface errors.

**Answering Examination Questions** treats nine common methods of developing essays. The list is not exhaustive, and you may wish to

expand it. Tell students that aims frequently overlap and that a combination of methods often effectively supports an argument.

When discussing **Writing on a Topic of Your Own**, you may want to introduce students to other strategies for choosing and limiting topics,

The material on the following pages offers help in planning and writing papers about literature. Here you will find suggestions for answering examination questions, choosing topics, gathering evidence, organizing essays, and writing, evaluating, and revising papers. Also included are several model essays.

## The Writing Process

- 1 We often refer to writing an essay as a *process*, which consists of six key stages or phases: **prewriting**, **writing**, **evaluating**, **revising**, **proofreading**, and **writing the final version**. In this process, much of the critical work—the thinking and planning—precedes the actual writing of the paper.
- 2 In the **prewriting** stage, the writer makes decisions about what to
- 3 say and how to say it. Prewriting activities include choosing a topic; considering purpose, audience, and tone; gathering ideas and orga-
- 4 nizing them; and developing a *thesis*—the controlling idea for the paper. In the **writing** stage, the writer uses the working plan to write a first draft of the essay. In the **evaluating** stage, the writer judges the first draft to identify strengths and weaknesses in content, organization, and style. **Revising**, the fourth stage, involves making changes to improve the weaknesses identified through evaluating. The writer can revise by adding, cutting, reordering, or replacing ideas and details. In the **proofreading** stage, the writer checks the revised draft to correct errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. The last stage, **writing**
- 6 **the final version**, involves preparing a clean copy and then proofreading it to catch any omissions or errors.

The stages of the writing process depend upon one another, which results in a “back and forth” movement among the stages. Few writers complete one stage entirely before moving to another, nor do they progress in a straight line from one stage to the next. For example, new ideas may emerge as the first draft is written, requiring a restatement of the thesis or additional supporting evidence. This interplay among stages is a natural part of writing—for all writers.

The amount of time devoted to each stage will vary with individual assignments. During a classroom examination, you may have limited time to plan your essay and to proofread your paper. For a term paper, you may have weeks or months to prepare your essay.

On the following pages the steps in this process are illustrated through the development of several model papers.

### THE WRITING PROCESS

1

Writing is process because a series of steps is involved, as in other processes such as cooking, sewing, and building a house.

2

Some people attempt to save time by skipping prewriting stage: this usually results in wasting time because writing becomes disorganized, unfocused.

3

Prewriting strategies may include asking and answering questions about topic.

4

Plan might be formal outline or simple list.

5

*Revising* means “reseeing”; involves rethinking, reconsidering.

6

Clean copy indicates that writer cares about paper and reader, important courtesy.

7

*What constitutes evidence when writing about literature?* Responses will vary. Possible answers: direct quotation, summary of episode, and reference to specific detail, imagery, character’s speech.



such as brainstorming, looping, cubing, clustering, and asking 5W-How questions.

## ANSWERING EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

1

Taking careful notes while reading is good preparation for essay exams. Recalling class discussion is also helpful, as is considering and preparing for kinds of questions likely to be asked.

2

To be relevant, answer must directly relate to question. Purpose of answering question is to prove understanding of concept, not to demonstrate vague awareness of topic.

3

Expert test-takers ask themselves "Why do I say this?" and then provide answer for person evaluating test.

4

Usually, at least two pieces of evidence should be given to support each point.

5

Many writers find asking themselves additional questions is good prewriting strategy for answering essay questions. Verb in test question determines what questions to ask.

6

"What are the parts?" is a helpful question in planning answer to analysis question.

## Answering Examination Questions

From time to time you will be asked to demonstrate your understanding of a literary work or topic by writing a short essay in class. Usually,

1 your teacher will select the subject of the essay. How well you do will depend not only on how carefully you have prepared for the examination but on how carefully you read and interpret the essay question.

Before you begin to answer an examination question, be sure you understand what the question calls for. If a question requires that you discuss the *theme* of a story, you will not fulfill the requirements of the question if you give a summary of the story's plot. If you are asked to compare two *humorous* essays, your answer will be unacceptable if you 2 mistakenly write about two *serious* essays. No matter how good your essay is, it will be unsatisfactory if you do not respond to the question accurately. Always take some time to read the essay question carefully in order to determine how it should be answered.

Remember that you are expected to demonstrate specific knowledge of the literature. Any general statement should be supported by 3 evidence. If you wish to show a character's internal conflict, for example, refer to specific actions, dialogue, thoughts and feelings, or direct comments by the author in order to illustrate your point. If you are allowed to use your textbook during the examination, you may occasionally quote short passages or refer to a specific page in order to provide supporting evidence.

At the start, it may be helpful to jot down some notes to guide you 4 in writing the essay. If you have several points to make, decide what the most effective order of presentation will be. You might build up to your strongest point, or you might present your points to develop a striking contrast. Aim for a logical organization.

Also remember that length alone is not satisfactory. Your answer must be relevant, and it must be presented in acceptable, correct English. Always take time to proofread your paper.

5 The key word in examination questions is the *verb*. Let us look briefly at some common instructions used in examinations.

**ANALYSIS** 6 A question may ask you to *analyze* some aspect of a literary work or topic. When you analyze something, you take it apart to see how each part works. On an examination, you will generally be directed to focus on some limited but essential aspect of a work in order to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding. A common type of ex-

ercise is *character analysis*, in which you draw on the most significant details of characterization in order to reach conclusions about a specific figure. For example, you might be asked to analyze the character of Odysseus as an epic hero, taking into account the traditional elements of characterization in classical epics (page 599). You might be asked to analyze the diction in the poem “Dream Deferred” (page 306). You might be asked to analyze the satirical elements in the play *Visit to a Small Planet* (page 423). Analysis may be applied to form, technique, or ideas.

**COMPARISON  
CONTRAST**

**7** A question may ask that you *compare* (or *contrast*) two things, such as techniques, ideas, characters, or works. When you *compare*, you point out likenesses; when you *contrast*, you point out differences. At times you will be asked to *compare and contrast*. In that event, you will be expected to deal with similarities and differences. You might be asked to compare the themes of O. Henry’s “The Gift of the Magi” (page 173) and De Maupassant’s “The Necklace” (page 190). You might be asked to contrast Walter Mitty’s fantasy life with his real life (page 63). You might compare and contrast the characteristics of the short story and the novel. Sometimes the instruction to *compare* implies both comparison and contrast. Always check with your teacher to make sure how inclusive the term *compare* is intended to be.

**DEFINITION**

**8** A question may ask you to *define* a literary term—to answer the question “What is it?” To define a term, first classify it, or assign it to a larger class or group. Then discuss the specific features that make it different from other members of the same class. You should also provide specific examples that illustrate the term. For example, if asked to define the term *personification*, you would first identify it as a figure of speech (general class) and then indicate that it gives human qualities to something nonhuman (specific feature). You might then use “Silver,” the poem by Walter de la Mare on page 326, as a specific example of personification.

**DESCRIPTION**

**9** If a question asks you to *describe* a setting or a character, you are expected to give a picture in words. In describing a setting, include not only features that establish the historical period and locale, but those features that help to evoke a mood. In describing a character, deal with both direct and indirect methods of characterization (see page 67). You might be asked to describe the setting in the opening scene of *Great Expectations* (page 668) in order to demonstrate how Dickens creates an atmosphere of mystery and terror. You might be asked to describe the eccentric character of Miss Havisham in that novel.

**7**

When planning an answer to comparison-contrast question, ask “How are these things alike?” and “How are they different?”

**8**

Specific examples should be given to illustrate features that make term different from other members of its class.

**9**

When answering question calling for description, test-takers should keep in mind purpose for describing, not merely repeat information from selection. Purpose is usually to state dominant impression created by setting or character. Question might be “What dominant impression is created?”

**10**

A good way to plan answer to discussion question is to ask "What major points could I make about this topic?" and "How are these points related?"

**11**

To plan an evaluative answer, test-taker must first ask "What are the criteria for making a judgment?"

**12**

Before beginning answer to question calling for explanation, test-taker might ask "How many applicable reasons can I think of?"

**13**

Illustration requires test-takers to recall as many examples as they can to plan answer.

**14**

Question test-taker must ask is "What is the meaning of this work?"

**DISCUSSION 10** The word *discuss* in a question is much more general than the other words we've looked at. When you are asked to discuss a subject, you are expected to examine it in detail. A question might direct you to discuss the characteristics of the informal essay that apply to James Thurber's "How to Name a Dog" (page 227). You might be asked to discuss the tone of Dickens' "Fragments of an Autobiography" (page 264). You might be asked to discuss the use of dramatic irony in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (page 482).

**EVALUATION 11** If a question asks you to *evaluate* a literary work or some aspect of one or more works, you are expected to determine if a writer has successfully achieved his or her purpose, and how important that purpose is. To evaluate, you must apply criteria, or standards of judgment, which may relate to both literary content and form. You must also supply evidence from the literary work or works to support your judgment. You might be asked to evaluate Tennyson's effectiveness in conveying a mood of indolence in "The Lotus-Eaters" (page 656).

**EXPLANATION 12** A question may ask you to *explain* something. When you explain, you give reasons for something being the way it is. You make clear a character's actions, or you show how something has come about. You might, for example, be asked to explain the relation between Mitty's daydreams and actual events in "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" (page 63.) You might be asked to explain Kreton's plan for world domination in *Visit to a Small Planet* (page 423). You might be asked to explain the concept of vengeance in the *Odyssey* (page 599) or how the subplots are connected to the main plot of *Great Expectations* (page 668).

**ILLUSTRATION 13** The word *illustrate*, *demonstrate*, or *show* asks that you provide examples to support a point. You might be asked to give examples of anachronisms in Heyward Broun's "The Fifty-First Dragon" (page 199). You might be asked to illustrate Emily Dickinson's use of startling and original diction to present fresh images in her poetry (pages 295, 321). You might be asked to demonstrate musical effects in James Stephens' "The Shell" (page 342). Or you might be asked to show that in the *Odyssey* Homer mixes real and fabulous elements (page 599).

**INTERPRETATION 14** The word *interpret* in a question asks that you give the meaning or significance of something. For example, you might be asked to provide an interpretation for a symbol, such as the journey in Christina Rossetti's "Uphill" (page 394). You might be asked to interpret the meaning of a work such as Edwin Muir's "The Castle" (page 389).



- 15 Sometimes you will be asked to agree or disagree with a stated interpretation of a work, giving specific evidence to support your position. For example, see the essay topics on page 851.
- 16 You will find that there is frequent overlapping of approaches. In discussing a subject, you may draw upon illustration, explanation, analysis, or any other approach that is useful. In comparing or contrasting two works, you may rely on description or interpretation. However, an examination question generally will have a central purpose, and it is important that you focus on this purpose in preparing your answer.

## Using the Writing Process to Answer an Essay Question

Even if you are well prepared for an examination, you may not develop your essay effectively unless you manage your time well. Although you may have to work quickly, you should nevertheless devote some time to each stage of the writing process. The following suggestions indicate how you can use the writing process to develop an answer to an essay question. Once you become familiar with this pattern, you will have a plan that enables you to work quickly and efficiently.

**PREWRITING** 1 The examination question itself often establishes the topic and, through its key verb (*analyze, compare, interpret, etc.*) suggests an approach for developing an answer. Several prewriting steps remain:

- 2 1. *Write a thesis statement.* A thesis statement is a sentence that represents the main point of your paper. It generally appears at the beginning of an essay and establishes the position you are going to support.
- 3 2. *Develop points that support the thesis statement.* There should always be at least two supporting points. In a short essay all the points may be presented in a single paragraph. In a longer paper each point may be stated as the topic sentence of a separate paragraph. Each point should clearly support the idea expressed in the thesis.
- 4 3. *Locate supporting evidence in the literary work(s).* Evidence can include specific details, direct quotations, incidents, or images that support each point.
- 5 4. *Organize the major points and evidence.* Arrange your ideas and details logically so that your plan includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

15 Important to focus answer on work under study, not on writer's feelings. Interpreting work is not same as explaining one's reactions to it or feelings about it.

16 Illustration is perhaps most frequent kind of overlap and can be used with every other approach.

17 An effective test-taker will incorporate purpose in thesis statement.

### USING THE WRITING PROCESS TO ANSWER AN ESSAY QUESTION

1 Prewriting step can consist of series of quick notes jotted on separate piece of paper.

2 Thesis statement is controlling plan for essay and gives writer direction about how to proceed.

3 Each point will probably require at least one specific example or other evidence from text.

4 Good test-takers/writers give as much evidence as possible.

5 Many writers believe that saving strongest point for last is most effective method of organization.

**6** Brief introductions and conclusions are acceptable when answering essay questions.

**7** Some test-takers find it useful to pretend that teacher is only vaguely familiar with material they are discussing. Such pretending forces them to explain clearly.

**8** This process is easier if writer has skipped every other line in order to provide space for revising.

**9** One effective method of proofreading is to begin with last sentence and read backward through essay before reading essay in normal order. This method helps writers avoid seeing what they think they wrote instead of what is on the page.

**WRITING 6** Using your prewriting plan as a guide, write your essay. In the **introduction**, identify the work(s) under study and state your thesis. In the **body** present your major points with supporting evidence. In the **conclusion** restate your thesis and summarize what you have demonstrated. As you write, adopt a tone appropriate for your purpose (to convey ideas) and for your audience (your teacher, in most cases). Use straightforward language that is serious without being affected, and include transitional expressions (connecting words or phrases, such as *nevertheless*, *finally*, and *by contrast*) to make clear the relationships among ideas.

**EVALUATING** Quickly evaluate, or judge, your answer by asking the following questions:

<b>Purpose</b>	1. Have I answered the specific assignment or questions?
<b>Introduction</b>	2. Have I included a thesis statement that specifies what the answer will discuss?
<b>Body</b>	3. Have I developed at least two major points that support the thesis statement?
	4. Have I included enough evidence from the literary work to support each major point?
	5. Is the order of ideas in the essay clear and logical?
<b>Conclusion</b>	6. Have I included a conclusion that summarizes findings or restates the main idea?

**REVISING 8** Using your evaluation, improve your essay by *adding*, *cutting*, *reordering*, or *replacing* ideas and details.

**PROOFREADING 9** Review your answer to locate and correct errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. If your teacher indicates you have time to do so, prepare a clean copy of your answer and proofread it again to catch any errors or omissions.

## Sample Examination Questions and Answers

On the following pages you will find some sample examination questions and answers for study and discussion. Note that the questions or assignments (shown in *italics*) may be phrased as essay topics.

# I

**QUESTION** Poe uses irony in “The Cask of Amontillado” (page 95) to heighten the effect of horror. In a paragraph give specific examples of Poe’s method.

## DEVELOPING AN ANSWER

This is an exercise in *illustration*. Your aim is to select examples of irony that intensify the terror of the narrative. How will you proceed?

One approach is to consider the kinds of irony Poe uses. You have learned that one common kind of irony is *dramatic irony*, in which the reader knows something that the character is ignorant of (see page 68). Another kind of irony, called *verbal irony*, is a way of saying one thing and meaning the opposite (see page 37). You might decide to focus on examples of these two kinds of irony. You would then need to identify effective examples of each kind in the story.

- 1 Once you have chosen an approach, jot down some prewriting
- 2 notes to guide you in writing. These notes can be arranged under two heads:

### Dramatic Irony

The reader knows that Montresor is plotting revenge against Fortunato, but Fortunato has no inkling of this. When the two men meet during the carnival, Fortunato is greeted as a friend.

Fortunato is wearing a clown costume. He doesn’t realize what the reader knows—that he is being taken for a fool.

These examples reveal Montresor’s diabolic character to the reader while hiding the truth from the intended victim.

### Verbal Irony

In the vaults the dampness causes Fortunato to cough. He says that a cough will not kill him. Montresor agrees, saying that he will not die of a cough. The statement seems innocent, but the reader knows that the words are menacing.

Montresor drinks to Fortunato’s long life, knowing that his hours are numbered.

These examples show Montresor toying with Fortunato before he kills him.

## WRITING AN ANSWER

Here is a model paragraph developed from the prewriting notes.

Topic sentence restates question.

Subordinate Idea

In “The Cask of Amontillado,” Poe uses **dramatic and verbal irony to heighten the effect of horror**. *His use of dramatic irony reveals*

3 *Montresor’s diabolic character to the reader while hiding the truth from the intended victim, Fortunato.* The reader knows from the outset that Montresor has been plotting revenge against Fortunato, but Fortunato

Supporting Statements

4 *is completely ignorant of his intention. When the two meet during the*

## SAMPLE EXAMINATION QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1

*What other approach might you choose?* Responses will vary. Focusing on two kinds of irony is probably most effective.

2

Organizing information is important step in prewriting.

3

Subordinate idea is first supporting point for topic sentence.

4

Evidence for this point is summary of an episode.



**5**  
Subordinate idea is second supporting point for topic sentence.

**6**  
Again, evidence for this point is summary of incident.

**7**  
Conclusion is more than restatement of topic sentence; it explains how irony contributes to horror.

**8**  
In single paragraph, thesis and topic sentence are same. In multi-paragraph essay, topic sentences are subordinate ideas that support thesis. Thesis is stated in first paragraph of essay.

**9**  
Analysis requires that writer examine different parts or aspects of character.

**10**  
Example of why prewriting is important; evidence must be gathered and examined to arrive at thesis.

**11**  
*What are "explicit clues"?* Explicit clues are direct statements. Implicit clues are implications derived from statements.

**Subordinate Idea 5**

**Supporting Statements 6**

**Concluding Sentence 7**

carnival, Montresor greets Fortunato with pretended pleasure. Fortunato is wearing a clown suit. He does not realize what the reader knows—that he is in fact going to play the fool. *Poe makes use of verbal irony to show Montresor toying with Fortunato before he kills him.* In the vaults the dampness causes Fortunato to cough. He says in jest that the cough will not kill him, and Montresor agrees. His comment, that Fortunato will not die of a cough, appears innocent on the surface, but Montresor really means that Fortunato is going to die in some other way. When they drink a toast, Montresor drinks to Fortunato's long life, knowing full well that his hours are numbered. *The irony in the story heightens the horror because it emphasizes the cruelty of the murderer.*

Length: 200 words

**8** In this example, the question provides you with a *thesis statement*—that irony in "The Cask of Amontillado" heightens the effect of horror. A thesis statement is a sentence that expresses the *thesis*, or the central idea that gives focus to your paper. The thesis statement indicates what the paper will be about. Although the statement of the thesis appears at the opening of the essay, it represents the end product of thinking. Generally, you will be required to formulate your own thesis statement about a subject.

## II

**QUESTION** Analyze the character of the speaker in Frost's "Mending Wall" (page 329).

**DEVELOPING 9** This is an exercise in *character analysis*. This assignment is more demanding than the first assignment because you have to exercise your own judgment in setting limits to your answer. The question also requires that you supply your own thesis statement. Your thesis statement should be formulated *after* you have examined the evidence and come to a conclusion about the subject.

**10** Assuming that you have the text of the poem to work from, you might go through it line by line, noting explicit and implicit clues to the speaker's character. You might jot down line references alongside your notes to guide you in writing your paper. As you work, look for major characteristics that will provide a focus for your essay.

This is one way to approach the assignment:

## 12 Character of Speaker

- 13** Attitude of speaker throughout poem is reflective. He likes to question things. Speaker seems to have a strong feeling against barriers. He believes “something” in nature rebels against walls (1–4; 9–11).
- OPEN MIND** He qualifies this: Some walls are useful—those that keep hunters out (5–9); those that control livestock (30–31).  
He wants to reason with his neighbor about the function of walls (28–34).  
He respects the ideas of others. Despite his own beliefs, at spring mending-time, he informs his neighbor of the gaps (11–12).
- SENSE OF HUMOR** Speaker thinks of the mending as an “outdoor game” (21). He considers business silly and teases his neighbor (25–26).  
He feels mischievous and plays with the idea of saying that “elves” are responsible for the pranks (36).
- REALISTIC** He would like his neighbor to think for himself (28–34).  
He suppresses the impulse to impose his own ideas (36–38).  
Although he views his neighbor as a “stone savage,” blindly following tradition, he does not try to change his mind (38–42).

What you might conclude from this set of prewriting notes is that the speaker is a mature, thoughtful man who has learned to accept and live with the shortcomings of others. Each of the overall characteristics shown in the notes can become the subject of a paragraph.

## WRITING AN ANSWER

This is what the final essay might look like.

### INTRODUCTION

**Thesis Statement 14** *The speaker in Frost’s “Mending Wall” is a mature, thoughtful man who has learned to accept and live with the shortcomings of others.* It is clear that he has a strong feeling against barriers in nature and barriers in human relationships, yet recognizes that he must be resigned to the existence of such barriers.

### BODY

**Topic Sentence 15** *The first thing we learn about the speaker is that he admits he doesn’t know all the answers and keeps an open mind.* There is “something” in nature, he tells us, that rebels against walls. He doesn’t know what this something is, but he is sympathetic to it. Not that he is inflexible on the subject of walls: he recognizes that some walls, like those that keep hunters and livestock out, are useful and necessary.

**Supporting Evidence 16** *Unlike his neighbor who clings uncritically to tradition and keeps on repeating “Good fences make good neighbors,” the speaker questions the purpose of walls. Yet, he respects the ideas and rights of others. Despite his own beliefs, he feels obligated to respect his neighbor’s wishes, and at spring mending-time, the men meet to repair the wall between their properties.*

## 12

Informal outline is used to organize ideas and evidence.

## 13

Writer has expressed ideas in complete sentences. Phrases are acceptable in informal outlines, but using complete sentences helps writer clarify ideas.

## 14

Thesis statement may appear anywhere in introductory paragraph. In the answer to an essay question, it frequently comes first.

## 15

*How does the topic sentence relate to the thesis statement?* Reinforces idea that speaker is mature, thoughtful.

## 16

Supporting evidence includes quotes and details from poem.

**17**  
*How does the topic sentence relate to the thesis statement?*  
Humor and good nature are part of maturity.

**18**  
Evidence includes quote, summary, paraphrase.

**19**  
Topic sentence restates idea in thesis.

**20**  
Conclusion is not just a restatement of the thesis; it provides additional ideas about speaker's character.

**21**  
Assignment calls for writer to discuss significant differences in character. For this purpose, noting other kinds of differences, such as gender or height, would not be appropriate.

**22**  
Writer chooses to focus on emotional makeup of characters.

**23**  
Although preliminary outline is informal, writer uses complete sentences, perhaps to clarify ideas.

**Topic Sentence 17** The speaker shows himself to be a good-natured man with a sense of humor. He refers to the mending of the wall as "just another kind of outdoor game." In a playful mood he teases his neighbor, telling him that the apple trees will never get across to eat the cones under the pine trees. He admits to feeling mischievous and considers putting the blame for the pranks on elves.

**Supporting Evidence 18**

**Topic Sentence 19** The speaker is realistic enough to realize that he cannot change his neighbor's thinking by reasoning with him. He knows that the wall is more than a barrier between their lands; it represents a barrier between their habits of thinking. He suppresses the impulse to put a notion in his neighbor's head: "I'd rather/He said it for himself." Although he views his neighbor as "an old-stone savage armed," blindly following tradition, he does not attempt to impose his own ideas. He knows his neighbor has an unquestioning mind and that it is futile to argue with him.

**Supporting Evidence 20**

**CONCLUSION 20** Even though he disagrees with his neighbor's philosophy, we know that the speaker will remain on good terms with him. Undoubtedly he will continue to meet with him at spring mending-time and keep the wall between them as they go.

Length: 396 words

### III

**QUESTION** The young lovers in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (page 482) seem ideally suited to each other because they have so many characteristics in common. Yet

**21** Shakespeare has been careful to differentiate them. Write an essay pointing out significant differences in these characters.

**DEVELOPING AN ANSWER** This is an exercise in *contrast*. Since you are to write a brief essay, you will not be able to deal with every significant aspect of the characters;

**22** you will have to select a few key aspects to focus on.

Again, begin by taking notes:

#### Differences

##### 23 Romeo

Seems to be ruled by his emotions. In first act he is melancholy, moody, lovesick over Rosaline. After he meets Juliet he becomes ecstatic.

##### Juliet

Juliet appears thoughtful and mature. In her first scene, she is dignified and composed. She reserves judgment until she can see for herself.



He is rash—he kills Tybalt in fury. In Friar's cell, when he hears the Prince's edict of banishment, he loses control of himself. He depends on others to make decisions for him. He relies on his friends and the Friar to help him resolve his difficulties

In balcony scene she exhibits common sense and practicality. She takes lead in making the arrangements for their marriage.

She is resourceful. She pretends to accept the Nurse's counsel to avoid suspicion.

She manages to keep her head under stress. While she and the Friar plot a stratagem to avert the marriage to Paris, she pretends to be ruled by her parent's wishes

**24 Thesis Statement:** Romeo is more emotional and excitable; Juliet is more level-headed and resourceful.

## WRITING AN ANSWER

Here is a model essay developed from the prewriting notes.

**INTRODUCTION** **25** The young lovers in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* have many characteristics in common. Yet Shakespeare has been careful to differentiate them. **Thesis Statement** **26** *Romeo is more emotional and impulsive; Juliet more level-headed and resourceful.*

**BODY** **Topic Sentence** **27** **Romeo seems to be ruled by emotions rather than by reason.** When we first meet him in the play, he is lovesick, moody, and restless. He spends his time daydreaming and sighing over Rosaline. **Supporting Evidence** **27** Within a short while, he is blissfully ecstatic in declaring his love for Juliet. When he is provoked into a duel by Tybalt, he loses his head and kills him. Then, in the Friar's cell, when he learns that the Prince has banished him, he loses control of himself. He seems dependent upon others to think for him. His friends Benvolio and Mercutio have to help him get over his infatuation with Rosaline. Later, he relies on the Friar's counsel to cope with his grief. He yields easily to despair. When he hears that Juliet is dead, he immediately decides to buy poison and end his own life.

**Topic Sentence** **28** **While Juliet is every bit as ardent as Romeo and shares his youthful impulsiveness, she exhibits greater thoughtfulness and common sense.** When we first meet her, she appears dignified and composed. **Supporting Evidence** She does not become excited at having received a proposal of marriage, but reserves judgment until she meets Paris. After she and Romeo declare their love for one another, she takes the lead in arranging for their marriage. When she hears of her cousin Tybalt's death, Juliet is quick to condemn Romeo, then catches herself and checks her outburst. She realizes that Romeo has acted in self-

**24** **What organizational pattern does the thesis suggest?** Body of paper will discuss Romeo first, then Juliet.

**25** The author and title of the work to be discussed are stated in the introduction.

**26** In this example, thesis, as is traditional, is last sentence in introduction. Thesis statement commits writer to a plan and lets the reader know what to expect.

**27** Ideas in notes have been expanded and further developed.

**28** **How is the topic sentence related to the thesis statement?** "Thoughtfulness and common sense" is restatement of "level-headed and resourceful." Reader will expect writer to cite evidence showing that Juliet is "level-headed and resourceful."

29

Conclusion relates to introduction. Topic sentence is similar to first sentence of answer.

## CHOOSING A TOPIC

1

If class has read work together, writer might choose topic from issues raised in class discussion. Questions at end of selection may suggest topic.

2

Brainstorming or listing ideas for essays, then considering how much time and space would be required to develop each idea, is one approach to choosing and narrowing topics. May be done by individuals or in groups.

3

Writers might select topic by asking themselves questions about literary work: What kind of person is this character? What is the function of a particular element in the work? How should this work be interpreted? What is the value of this work? What is the relationship between two elements in this work?

defense. As circumstances threaten to overwhelm her, she shows skill in handling people. When the Nurse, her trusted confidant, suggests that she commit bigamy, Juliet pretends to accept her counsel to avoid suspicion. She manages to keep her head and not alert her family to the stratagem that she and the Friar have plotted to avert her marriage to Paris.

**CONCLUSION** 29 **By means of these differences, Shakespeare makes individuals of his characters.** Romeo and Juliet are not mere stereotypes of young people in love. Because of Shakespeare's skillful characterization, we find their actions and distinct natures true to life.

**Topic Sentence**

Length: 368 words

## Writing on a Topic of Your Own

### Choosing a Topic

At times you may be asked to write an essay on a topic of your own choosing. Often it will be necessary to read a work or group of works more than once before a suitable topic presents itself.

Although any literary subject that interests you is usually acceptable as a topic for study, it is a good idea to steer away from broad subjects that invite generalizations and sweeping statements. You may be fascinated by the language of *Romeo and Juliet*, but in a 350–500 word essay, you would be forced to cover the subject too superficially to demonstrate any real mastery of the material. It might be better to restrict yourself to one aspect of the language—for example, images of light—in one scene—the balcony scene of Act Two.

What the writer must often do is limit a broad subject to a narrow topic—one that can be discussed thoughtfully in the time and space available. You might have to divide a subject into several parts and select only one part as the focus of your essay.

Students sometimes worry that if they choose a narrow topic, they won't have enough to say. This will seldom present a problem if you have developed the habit of digging into a selection and examining it in depth.

A topic may focus on one element or technique in a work. If you are writing about fiction, you might concentrate on some aspect of plot, such as conflict. Or you might concentrate on character, setting, or

theme. If you are writing about poetry, you might choose to analyze imagery or figurative language. In writing about drama, you might focus on dramatic irony or stage conventions. A topic may deal with more than one aspect of a work. You might, for example, discuss several elements of a short story in order to show how an idea or theme is developed. Keep the key verbs, such as *analyze*, *compare*, *illustrate*, in mind (see pages 840–843) as guides in limiting a topic.

- 5 Once you have a topic in mind, your object is to form it into a *thesis*, a controlling idea that represents the conclusion of your findings. This thesis, of course, will appear at the opening of your paper. It may be necessary to read a work several times before you can formulate a thesis. You would then need to present the evidence supporting your position. Here are some examples showing how a thesis differs from a topic.

<b>Topic</b>	7 The Central Conflict in “Split Cherry Tree” (page 76)
<b>Thesis</b>	The central conflict is between two ways of life—an out-of-date tradition of toil and limited education, represented by Pa, and a new way of life based on scientific and technological progress, represented by Professor Herbert.
<b>Topic</b>	John Masefield’s Diction in “Cargoes” (page 304)
<b>Thesis</b>	Masefield has chosen words with pleasant and unpleasant associations to suggest a contrast between the exotic romance of the old ships and the unromantic utility of modern vessels.
<b>Topic</b>	The Epic Hero in the <i>Odyssey</i> (page 599)
<b>Thesis</b>	Odysseus surpasses the other characters in intelligence, courage, and prowess, and appears at times to be superhuman, but he also has all-too-human failings that lead to misfortune for himself and his men.

## Gathering Evidence/Formulating Major Points

- 1 It is a good idea to take notes as you read, even if you do not yet have a topic in mind. Later on, when you have settled on a topic, you can discard any notes that are not relevant. Some people prefer a worksheet, others index cards. In the beginning, you should record all your reactions. A topic may emerge during this early stage. As you continue to read, you will shape your topic into a rough thesis.
- 2 When you take notes, make an effort to state ideas in your own words. If a specific phrase or line is so important that it deserves to be quoted directly, be sure to enclose the words in quotation marks.

4 *As you think about the literature you have read, what topics occur to you?* Responses will vary.

5 After choosing topic, writer might ask, “What is the significance of the topic?” Developing an answer will help formulate thesis.

6 Sometimes careful examination of evidence will cause writer to reformulate thesis or choose a new one.

7 *How does the thesis differ from this topic?* Makes statement about topic that must be proved.

### GATHERING EVIDENCE / FORMULATING MAJOR POINTS

1 Thinking Models in Close Reading Sections (pp. 3–9, 218–219) provide examples of kinds of notes to take during first reading. On second reading, notes may be amplified.

2 Important step—putting ideas in own words helps writer clarify thoughts.



3

If you quote directly from fiction, enclose page number in parentheses following quotation.

4

This approach makes reading quoted materials easier.

5

Skimming with purpose in mind can be especially effective. Writers might focus attention on characters, imagery, or another element of the work that they find particularly interesting.

6

**Point of view:** In this context, Dickens' ideas or beliefs.

7

**Which approach would you select?** Responses will vary.

When you transfer your notes to your final paper, be sure to copy quotations exactly.

3

If you cite lines in a poem, you should enclose the line numbers in parentheses following the quotation. The following note, which is for the *Odyssey* (page 599), shows you how to incorporate two lines of a poem into your own paper:

Odysseus notes that the Cyclopes are barbarians without laws and traditions when he says "Cyclopes have no muster and no meeting,/no consultation or old tribal ways" (lines 99–100).

The slash(/) shows the reader where line 99 ends and line 100 begins. If you cite three or more lines, you should separate the quotation

4

from your own text in this way:

Upon his return to Ithaca, the goddess Athena appears to Odysseus and transforms him so that he is seen in his former magnificence:

Lithe and young she made him,  
ruddy with sun, his jawline clean, the beard  
no longer gray upon his chin.

(lines 856–858)

Sometimes a direct quotation from a literary work can be the springboard to a topic. Consider, for example, a paper based on Odysseus' characterization of himself as "formidable for guile in peace and war."

Let us suppose that you have just concluded the unit on *Great Expectations* (page 668). You are instructed to write an essay of approximately 500 words on a topic of your own choosing.

5

You haven't any ideas at the outset so you skim through the unit, refreshing your memory of characters and events. You reread notes and questions, sifting through this material for approaches and ideas. You become aware that one of Dickens' important themes in the novel has to do with the need for compassion in human relationships. You believe that exploring this theme will help to clarify Dickens' point of view.

6

The subject is too broad, however, for an essay of 500 words, so you consider ways to narrow its scope. Should you confine yourself to a chapter or to one of the stages of the novel? Should you focus on a key incident? Each approach is possible. In choosing an approach, be guided by the nature of the problem and by your own interests.

7

You decide to restrict your study to Pip's relationship with the convict, Abel Magwitch. At this point you begin taking notes.

**8** Do not be concerned about taking too many notes. Until you settle on a clear focus for your paper, you should record all your reactions.

**9 Notes**

When the convict returns many years after their meeting on the marshes, Pip thinks of him as a wild animal: "The abhorrence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some terrible beast" (page 773).

**10** Pip is terrified to be alone with him and locks him in the bedroom.

Pip is disgusted by his manners. He eats "like a hungry old dog" (page 779).

Pip learns that the convict has risked his life in coming back to England. He feels a concern for the convict's safety and plans to get him out of England.

He learns about Magwitch's miserable life and the injustice he has suffered.

He finds out that the convict is Estella's father.

After the accident with the steamer, Pip refuses to abandon Magwitch. He provides him with dry clothes and looks after him. He accompanies him to London. He feels that his place is at Magwitch's side.

Pip recognizes that a change has taken place in his feelings: "For now my repugnance to him had all melted away, and in the hunted, wounded, shackled creature who held my hand in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously toward me with great constancy through a series of years" (page 815).

Pip has nothing to gain, but he does not desert Magwitch. He does not reveal that Magwitch's possessions will be forfeited to the Crown and that all his hopes of making Pip's fortune are gone.

While Magwitch is in the prison infirmary, Pip visits him every day. During the trial Pip holds his hand and comforts him.

After Magwitch is sentenced to death, Pip petitions the Home Secretary of State and others in authority.

When the old man is dying, Pip comforts him by telling him that his child is alive, that she has become a lady, and that he loves her.

From this set of notes we can conclude that Dickens emphasizes the change in Pip's attitude toward the convict Abel Magwitch. We can also derive a thesis statement: *As Pip develops compassion for Magwitch, we witness a reformation in his character.*

**8** Irrelevant data can always be discarded; when writing, it is better to have too much information than too little.

**9** Studying Pip's relationship with Abel Magwitch allows writer to take notes in chronological order.

**10** *Why is the page number listed?* Citation for direct quotation.

**11** Although phrases are acceptable when taking notes, writer uses complete sentences here to help clarify ideas.

**12** Thesis statement allows for chronological organization of evidence. Writer can trace Pip's character development over a period of time.

## ORGANIZING IDEAS

**1** Many experts suggest presenting strongest point last for emphasis.

**2** Notes that have no clear relation to thesis should be ignored or discarded.

**3** Plan is example of informal outline.

**4** Plan is skeletal. Writer will need to add evidence to develop paper and to support main ideas.

## WRITING THE ESSAY

**1** Language should be clear, precise, serious. Slang and colloquialisms are inappropriate; however, writer should be careful to sound thoughtful, not pompous.

**2** *What are some examples of transitional expressions?* Responses will vary. Examples: *first, last, in addition, after, before, however.*

## Organizing Ideas

Before you begin writing, organize your main ideas to provide for an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The introduction should identify the author(s) and work(s). It should contain a statement of

**1** your thesis as well. The body of your paper should present the evidence supporting your thesis. The conclusion should bring together your main ideas.

Your plan will grow out of the notes you have compiled. Remember **2** that you need not use *all* the evidence you have collected. You should include material that has bearing on your topic.

**3** This is one kind of plan. It indicates the main idea of each paragraph.

**4**

### INTRODUCTION

#### Paragraph 1

*Thesis* As Pip develops compassion for Magwitch, we witness a reformation in his character.

### BODY

#### Paragraph 2

Pip is terrified and repelled when the convict reenters his life many years after their meeting on the marshes.

#### Paragraph 3

As he learns more about Magwitch, Pip loses his fear and strong aversion to the man.

#### Paragraph 4

After the accident in which Magwitch is fatally injured, Pip acts out of deep sympathy rather than a sense of obligation.

#### Paragraph 5

Through his compassion for Magwitch, Pip becomes a more admirable and appealing character.

### CONCLUSION

#### Paragraph 6

Dickens seems to be saying that compassion brings out the best in human nature.

## Writing the Essay

Use your prewriting plan as a guide in writing your paper. Focus on expressing clearly the major points and evidence supporting your thesis statement. Include a topic sentence and supporting sentences in

**1** each paragraph. As you write, use language that is appropriate in **2** tone. Include transitional expressions to make clear the relationships among your ideas.



Here is a model essay developing the thesis statement. For an earlier draft of this essay, see pages 857–859.

# TITLE

## THE THEME OF COMPASSION IN *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*

### INTRODUCTION

3 An important theme in *Great Expectations* is the power of compassion to transform human nature. Dickens make this clear when Pip undergoes a change in attitude toward his benefactor, the convict Abel Magwitch. *As Pip develops compassion for Magwitch, we witness a reformation in his character.*

#### Thesis Statement

### BODY

#### Topic Sentence

Pip is terrified and repelled when the convict reenters his life many years after their meeting on the marshes. Pip thinks of him as a wild animal: "The abhorrence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some terrible beast" (page 773).

#### Supporting Evidence

4 He is afraid to be alone with him, and after Magwitch goes to bed, Pip locks him in the bedroom. Pip finds his manners disgusting and watches him eat "like a hungry old dog" (page 779).

#### Topic Sentence

5 As he learns more about Magwitch, Pip loses his fear and strong aversion to the man. He finds out that Magwitch has suffered great wretchedness and injustice. He also discovers that the convict is Estella's father. Realizing that the convict has risked his life in returning to England, Pip feels it is his duty to get the man out of the country.

#### Supporting Evidence

#### Topic Sentence

After the accident in which Magwitch is fatally injured, Pip acts out of deep sympathy rather than a sense of obligation. He treats the old man with great kindness, providing him with dry clothing and obtaining comforts for him. He refuses to abandon him and accompanies him to prison in London. Pip recognizes the change in himself: "For now my repugnance to him had all melted away, and in the hunted, wounded, shackled creature who held my hand in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt affectionately, gratefully, and generously toward me with great constancy through a series of years" (page 815).

#### Supporting Evidence

#### Topic Sentence

7 Through his compassion for Magwitch, Pip becomes a more admirable and appealing character. His final scenes with Magwitch are the most moving passages in the book. While Magwitch is in the prison infirmary, Pip visits him every day. During the trial, Pip holds his hand and comforts him. Out of kindness he does not reveal that Magwitch's possessions will be forfeited to the Crown and that his hopes of making Pip's fortune are gone. After Magwitch receives his death sentence, Pip petitions the Home Secretary for mercy. He sends out appeals to those in authority. Finally, to ease the old man's death, he tells

#### Supporting Evidence

3

Title and author are mentioned in introduction.

4

Why are page numbers included? Writer is using direct quotations and must show their source.

5

How does this topic sentence relate to the thesis? Tells why Pip's attitude begins to change.

6

Why is this quotation included? Illustrates Pip's recognition of his change in attitude.

7

How does this topic sentence relate to the thesis? Refers to reformation in Pip's character and states how compassion changes him.

**8**  
*How does the conclusion relate to the introduction?* Develops idea of compassion; it is more than a restatement of the thesis.

## EVALUATING AND REVISING PAPERS

**1**  
All professional writers evaluate and rewrite constantly. If experienced writers must use this process to achieve good work, then, logically, so must inexperienced writers.

**2**  
One step in process might be to share draft with other writers and ask for feedback.

**3**  
Learning to evaluate work of others through participating in peer-group evaluation can help writers learn to evaluate their own work more effectively. By answering these questions about someone else's work, writers can learn to apply guidelines to their own writing.

## CONCLUSION Topic Sentence

him that his little girl (Estella) is alive, that she has become a lady, and that he loves her.

**8** **Dickens seems to be saying that compassion brings out the best in human nature.** Pip outgrows the snobbery that leads him to value appearance rather than substance. In recognizing the good in Magwitch's character, he becomes capable of gratitude and generosity of spirit.

Length: 485 words

## Evaluating and Revising Papers

When you plan to write an essay in class, you have a limited amount of time to plan and develop your essay. Nevertheless, you should save a few minutes to read over your work and make necessary improvements. When an essay is assigned as homework, you have more time to prepare it carefully. Get into the habit of evaluating and revising your work. A first draft of an essay should be treated as a rough copy of your manuscript. Chances are that thinking about and reworking your first draft will result in a clearer and stronger paper.

To evaluate an essay, you judge its content, organization, and style by applying a set of criteria, or standards. Your goal in evaluating is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the paper. Knowing this, you will be able to make the changes that will improve the essay. To evaluate an essay about literature, ask yourself the following questions:

### Guidelines for Evaluating an Essay

Introduction	1. Have I included an introduction that identifies the subject of the paper? Have I identified the author(s) and literary work(s) the paper will deal with?
Thesis Statement	2. Have I included a thesis statement that clearly expresses the controlling idea for the paper?
Thesis Development	3. Have I included convincing main points that develop the thesis in the body of the paper?
	4. Have I included sufficient evidence from the work to support each main point?
Conclusion	5. Have I included a conclusion that synthesizes the main ideas or that suggests additional ideas for study?
Coherence	6. Have I arranged ideas logically and related them clearly to one another?
Style	7. Have I varied sentence beginnings and sentence structure? Have I defined any unfamiliar words or unusual terms? Have I used vivid and specific words?
Tone	8. Have I used language that is appropriate for my purpose and audience?

Writers usually revise by using any one of four basic techniques: *adding*, *cutting*, *reordering*, and *replacing*. For example, if the relationship of ideas is unclear, you can *add* transitional expressions (such as *first*, *finally*, and *by contrast*). If your language is not appropriate, you can *replace* slang, contractions, and informal expressions with more formal language. You can *cut* unrelated evidence, and you can *reorder*,  
 4 or rearrange, ideas that are difficult to follow.

On the following pages you will find a revised draft of the essay that appears on pages 855–856. The annotations in the margins indicate which revising techniques were used to make the changes. Compare the two versions of this paper, noting where the writer has made  
 5 vague or general statements more specific, clear, and concise.

replace; cut; cut

6 <sup>an</sup> One of the most important themes in the novel Great Expectations is the

replace; add

power of compassion to transform human nature. <sup>Dickens makes clear</sup> We see this when Pip under-

reorder; reorder; cut

goes a change in attitude toward Abel Magwitch, the convict who is his benefactor.

~~ter~~ As Pip develops compassion for Magwitch, we witness a reformation in his character.

replace

7 <sup>is terrified and repelled when the convict reenters his life many years</sup> Pip ~~has not seen the convict since his boyhood on the marshes. When Pip~~  
<sup>after their meeting on the marshes.</sup> recognizes him, ~~he is terrified.~~ Pip thinks of him as a wild animal: "The abhor-

replace

rence in which I held the man, the dread I had of him, the repugnance with

which I shrank from him, could not have been exceeded if he had been some ter-

cut

8 rible beast" (page 773). ~~Physically he is repelled.~~ He is afraid to be alone with

him, and after Magwitch goes to bed, Pip locks him in the bedroom. Pip finds his

manners disgusting and watches him eat "like a hungry old dog" (page 779).

4

Writers can also add evidence, cut unnecessary words from sentences, replace unclear ideas with clear ones, and reorder words in sentences for clarity.

5

*What does "concise" mean?* Absence of superfluous ideas, details, or words.

6

*Why did the writer cut?* For conciseness.

7

*Why did the writer replace?* To be more specific.

8

Sentence cut because it is redundant.



9

These changes make statement more specific by telling how Pip changes.

10

**Why did the writer add?** Additions tell what Magwitch has suffered.

11

Combining two sentences and making the first a subordinate clause improves clarity by indicating relationship between ideas.

12

**Why did the writer replace?** To be more specific. Changes explain why accident is significant.

13

Revised sentences clarify how specific details relate to paragraph's topic sentence.

14

Revised sentence is more concise.

15

Topic sentence is moved to the beginning of paragraph.

16

Sentence is revised to eliminate misplaced modifier.

17

Changes specify why Pip does not tell Magwitch. Replacing "his" with "Magwitch's" clarifies whose possessions are being discussed.

18

Replacement is more specific; tells what Pip does that shows that he is not giving up hope.

**cut; add; replace; replace** 9 <sup>more</sup> Pip begins to change as he learns about Magwitch's life. He finds out how <sup>Pip loses his fear and strong aversion to the man that</sup> ~~great~~ <sup>great</sup> ~~wretchedness and injustice.~~

**add** 10 Magwitch has suffered. He also discovers that the convict is Estella's father.

**replace; add** 11 <sup>Realizing that the convict</sup> Magwitch has risked his life in returning to England. Pip feels it is his duty to

get the man out of the country.

**replace** 12 After the accident with the steamer, Pip treats the old man more sympathetically. <sup>in which Magwitch is fatally injured, Pip acts out of deep sympathy rather than a sense of</sup> ~~treats the old man with great kindness,~~

**replace; add; replace** 13 <sup>obligation.</sup> He provides him with dry clothing and looks after him. <sup>obtaining comforts for him.</sup> ~~When the old~~ <sup>He refuses to abandon him and</sup>

**replace; reorder; replace** 14 <sup>the</sup> ~~man is taken~~ to prison in London. Pip accompanies him. Pip recognizes ~~that a~~ <sup>in himself:</sup>

**replace** 14 ~~change has taken place in his feelings:~~ "For now my repugnance to him had all

melted away, and in the hunted, wounded, shackled creature who held my hand

in his, I only saw a man who had meant to be my benefactor, and who had felt af-

fectionately, gratefully, and generously toward me with great constancy through

a series of years" (page 815).

**reorder** 15 His final scenes with Magwitch are the most moving passages in the book. <sup>While Magwitch is in the prison infirmary,</sup>

**add; cut** 16 Pip visits him in the infirmary every day. During the trial, Pip holds his hand

and comforts him. Through his compassion for Magwitch, Pip becomes a more

**add; replace; replace** 17 <sup>Out of kindness reveal Magwitch's</sup> admirable and appealing character. ~~He does not tell Magwitch that his posses-~~

sions will be forfeited to the Crown and that his hopes of making Pip's fortune

**replace** 18 are gone. After Magwitch receives his death sentence, Pip <sup>petition the Home Secretary</sup> ~~does not give up hope~~

*for mercy. He sends out appeals to those in authority. Finally, to ease the old man's death,*  
**replace; replace 19** of saving him. ~~When the old man is dying, he tells him that his child is alive,~~ *little girl (Estella)*

that she has become a lady, and that he loves her.

*Dickens seems to be saying that compassion brings out the best in human*  
*Pip outgrows the snobbery that leads him to value appearance*  
**replace 20** nature. ~~At the end of the book, Pip is no longer a snob.~~ *rather than substance.* In recognizing the good

**add 21** in Magwitch's character, he becomes capable of gratitude and generosity. *of spirit*

## Proofreading and Writing a Final Version

**1** After you have revised your draft, proofread your essay to locate and correct any errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. Pay particular attention to the correct capitalization and punctuation of any direct quotations you cite as evidence. Then prepare a final version of your essay by following correct manuscript form or your teacher's instructions for the assignment. After writing this clean copy, proofread once more to catch any errors or omissions made in copying.

**19**

Revised sentence clarifies who Magwitch's child is and explains why Pip tells him about her.

**20**

Vague statement is replaced by more specific one; specifies how compassion has changed Pip.

**21**

Addition is more specific; tells what kind of generosity.

### PROOFREADING AND WRITING A FINAL VERSION

**1**

Some writers read from beginning, placing left index finger on first word of first sentence and right index finger on punctuation mark that ends sentence, then reading sentence to check for coherence, clarity, and correctness. They repeat process with every sentence in essay.

## GUIDE TO LITERARY TERMS AND TECHNIQUES

**ALLITERATION** *The repetition of similar sounds, usually consonants or consonant clusters, in a group of words.* Common examples are “safe and sound,” “brown as a berry,” and “the more the merrier.” Although most alliteration occurs at the beginning of words, it may occur within words as well. When alliteration occurs at the beginning of words, it is called **initial alliteration**; when it occurs within words, it is called **internal** or **hidden alliteration**.

Alliteration has a wide and persistent appeal. It is frequently used in clichés, such as “a dime a dozen,” “bigger and better,” and “jump for joy.” Because alliteration adds emphasis to a group of words, it is often used in advertising jingles and in political slogans.

In poetry, alliteration can be an effective musical device as in these lines from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “The Day Is Done”:

The day is done, and the darkness  
Falls from the wings of night,  
As a feather is wafted downward  
From an eagle in his flight.

Alliteration is often combined with **rhyme** and other musical devices, as in this stanza from Edgar Allan Poe’s “Eldorado”:

Gaily bedight,  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow,  
Had journeyed long,  
Singing a song  
In search of Eldorado.

See **Repetition**.  
See also page 343.

**ALLUSION** *A reference in one work of literature to a person, place, or event in another work of literature or in history, art, or music.* Allusion can be used equally well in prose or poetry. As it is usually an appeal to the reader to share some experience with the writer, allusion is used to best effect when it refers to something familiar.

Allusions to the Bible are common in literature. In *Great Expectations*, Pip, the narrator, alludes to the Book of Genesis when he describes the Hulks, the

prison boat, as a “wicked Noah’s ark.” Literature is also filled with allusions to the plays of William Shakespeare. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens expects his readers to recognize the allusion to Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* when he describes Mr. Wopsle as a “ham” actor performing one of the noblest speeches ever written for the theater: “What he did on those occasions was to turn up his cuffs, stick up his hair, and give us Mark Antony’s oration over the body of Caesar.”

Allusions to ancient Greek and Roman literature are also common. The following poem alludes to a Greek myth. Medusa was one of the Gorgons, three horrible sisters with serpents for hair. Whoever looked at any of them instantly turned to stone. The allusion to Medusa here suggests that something, perhaps death, has brought the speaker’s life to a halt, that it no longer has any meaning:

**Medusa**  
Louise Bogan

I had come to the house, in a cave of trees,  
Facing a sheer sky.  
Everything moved,—a bell hung ready to strike,  
Sun and reflection wheeled by.

When the bare eyes were before me  
And the hissing hair,  
Held up at a window, seen through a door.  
The stiff bald eyes, the serpents on the forehead  
Formed in the air.

This is a dead scene forever now.  
Nothing will ever stir.  
The end will never brighten it more than this,  
Nor the rain blur.

The water will always fall, and will not fall,  
And the tipped bell make no sound.  
The grass will always be growing for hay  
Deep on the ground.

And I shall stand here like a shadow  
Under the great balanced day,  
My eyes on the yellow dust, that was lifting in the  
wind,  
And does not drift away.

See pages 178, 555.



**ANACHRONISM** *An event or detail existing out of its proper time in history.* William Shakespeare often uses anachronisms. A classic example is the reference to the game of billiards ("Let us to billiards") in *Antony and Cleopatra*, a play set in ancient times. The game of billiards was not invented until the sixteenth century. The clock that strikes in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* is also an anachronism, as there were no striking clocks in ancient Rome. Writers sometimes use anachronisms deliberately, to add humor to a piece of literature or to lend a sense of timelessness—that is, to prevent something from being "dated." In "The Fifty-First Dragon," Heywood Broun uses a number of modern references in a medieval setting. Examples include the character of the Headmaster and the references to faculty members, to campus slang, and to school spirit.

See page 205.

**ANALOGY** *An extended comparison showing the similarities between two things.* Analogies are often used for illustration (to explain something unfamiliar by comparing it to something familiar) or for argument (to persuade that what holds true for one thing holds true for the thing to which it is compared).

In "The Sound of the Sea," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow describes the sounds of the rising sea-tide in the first eight lines of the poem. In the last six lines, he draws an analogy between the sounds of the sea and inspiration:

So comes to us at times, from the unknown  
And inaccessible solitudes of being,  
The rushing of the sea-tides of the soul;  
And inspirations, that we deem our own,  
Are some divine foreshadowing and foreseeing  
Of things beyond our reason or control.

See page 282.

**ARGUMENT** *A form of discourse in which reason is used to influence or change people's ideas or actions.* Writers practice argument most often when writing non-fiction, particularly essays or speeches. In his famous speech delivered to the House of Burgesses on March 23, 1775, Patrick Henry advances the argument that only by armed resistance can the colonies defend themselves against England and gain their liberty. He concludes: "I know not what course

others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

See **Persuasion**.

See also page 216.

**ASIDE** *Words spoken by a character in a play, usually in an undertone, not intended to be heard by other characters on stage.* The aside is used in the theater to let the audience know what a character is really thinking or feeling as opposed to what he or she pretends to be thinking or feeling to the other characters in the play. Sometimes asides are exchanged between two characters whose dialogue is not meant to be heard by the other characters present. Many examples of this device may be found in the plays of William Shakespeare.

See **Conventions, Monologue, Soliloquy**.

See also page 528.

**ASSONANCE** *The repetition of similar vowel sounds, usually close together, in a group of words.* Familiar examples are "free and easy," "mad as a hatter," and so on. Assonance is used to please the ear and to emphasize certain sounds. Like other forms of sound repetition, it is mainly a poetic device. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow uses "rising tide" in "The Sound of the Sea." Another example is found in "Mending Wall," where Robert Frost writes: "and I am apple orchard."

See **Alliteration, Onomatopoeia, Repetition**.

See also page 343.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY** *A person's account of his or her own life.* An autobiography is generally written in narrative form and includes some introspection. Autobiographies are distinct from diaries, journals, and letters, which are not unified life stories written for publication. Autobiographies are also different from memoirs, which often deal, at least in part, with public events and important persons other than the author. It is not uncommon for anyone who has achieved distinction in life to write an account of his or her experiences. Autobiographies are frequently written by politicians, entertainers, high-ranking members of the services, and literary figures. For example, Winston Churchill's *My Early Life* is a famous autobiography by a political figure.

See **Biography, Nonfiction**.

**BALLAD** *A story told in verse and usually meant to be sung.* The earliest ballads, known as **folk ballads** or **popular ballads**, were composed anonymously and transmitted orally for generations. The main ballad tradition began in Europe in the late Middle Ages. The material was taken from local and national life, from legend and folklore. The most popular themes, often tragic ones, are disappointed love, jealousy, revenge, sudden disaster, and deeds of adventure and daring. Generally, the language is simple, the rhythm pronounced, and the story told through dialogue and action. A **refrain**, or chorus, is also a common element.

The traditional **ballad stanza** consists of four lines. The first and third lines have four stressed words or syllables; the second and fourth lines have three stresses. The number of unstressed syllables in each line may vary. The second and fourth lines usually rhyme. Here is a ballad stanza from an American folk ballad, "The Lover's Lament":

My déarest déar, the tîme draws néar  
When you and I must part;  
But little do you know the griéf or woe  
Of my poor troubled héart.

The folk ballad is still a living tradition in Sicily, Iceland, and many other parts of the world. In America, this tradition has flourished in the Appalachian Mountains, among cowhands, and within labor movements.

Another kind of ballad is the **literary ballad**, in which a known writer imitates the folk ballad. E. E. Cummings' "All in green went my love riding" is a literary ballad. Other distinguished examples include Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, John Keats's "La Belle Dame sans Merci," and Alfred Noyes's "The Highwayman."

See **Narrative Poetry**.

See also pages 384, 386, 388.

**BIOGRAPHY** *An account of a person's life written by another person.* Biography is one of the most popular forms of nonfiction. Biographies in English have taken many different forms since they were first written in medieval times to praise the virtues of saints and to celebrate the feats of heroes. The modern biographer aims at accuracy and usually makes an attempt to interpret the personality of the subject. Details of the social and historical

circumstances in which the subject lived are often included. A fine example of a detailed biography is James Boswell's *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, written in the eighteenth century and considered by many to have set the tone for modern biography.

See **Autobiography, Nonfiction**.

See also page 249.

**BLANK VERSE** *Verse written in unrhymed iambic pentameter, where each line usually contains ten syllables and every other syllable is stressed.* Blank verse is the principal English meter, the pattern used in some of the greatest English poetry, including the tragedies of William Shakespeare and the epics of John Milton. Unrhymed iambic lines prove particularly appropriate in treating serious themes. The following lines from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* are written in blank verse:

But soft! What light/through yon/dér win/dow  
breaks?  
It is/the east,/ and Jul/iet is/the sun!

See **Iambic Pentameter, Meter**.

See also page 528.

**CATASTROPHE** *The tragic dénouement, or unknitting, of a play or story.* The deaths of Romeo and Juliet represent the final catastrophe of William Shakespeare's play.

See **Plot**.

See also page 555.

**CHARACTERIZATION** *The personality a character displays; also, the means by which an author reveals that personality.* Generally, a writer develops a character in one or more of the following ways: (1) by showing the character acting and speaking; (2) by giving a physical description of the character; (3) by revealing the character's thoughts; (4) by revealing what other characters think about the character; (5) by commenting directly on the character. The first four methods are **indirect methods of characterization**. The writer shows or dramatizes the character and allows you to draw your own conclusions. The last method is **direct characterization**. The writer tells you directly what a character is like.

Direct characterization is always supported by indirect techniques, as characters must act or speak if the writer is developing a story. Also, if characters are to be believable, the reader must hear or see,

rather than simply be told, what the characters think or feel or do.

See **Characters, Point of View**.  
See also pages 67, 74, 86.

**CHARACTERS** *Persons—or animals, things, or natural forces presented as persons—appearing in a short story, novel, play, or narrative poem.* Characters are sometimes described as dynamic or static. **Dynamic characters** experience some change in personality or attitude. This change is an essential one and usually involves more than a mere change in surroundings or condition. In Morley Callaghan's "All the Years of Her Life," Alfred is an example of a character who undergoes a major change. **Static characters** remain the same throughout a narrative. They do not develop or change beyond the way in which they are first presented. Mitty in James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" is an example of a static character.

Characters in a **novel** are generally more fully developed than those in a short story, for example. Not only does the novelist have room to develop perhaps more than one dynamic character, but he or she may reveal a main character in many different stages of change. Pip, in Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations*, is a character who, in the course of growing up, undergoes important and basic changes in personality and outlook.

Characters are sometimes classified as **flat** or **round**. Flat characters have only one or two "sides," representing one or two traits. They are often stereotypes that can be summed up in a few words, for example, an "anxious miser" or a "strong, silent type." Round characters are complex and have many "sides" or traits. Their behavior is unpredictable because they are individuals, and their personalities are fully developed and require lengthy analysis. Flat characters, when developed by a skillful writer, may be as impressive as round characters.

See **Characterization**.  
See also pages 74, 86.

**CLIMAX** *That point of greatest emotional intensity, interest, or suspense in a narrative.* In drama, the climax is often identified with the **crisis**, or **turning point**.

See **Drama**.  
See also pages 37, 555.

**COMEDY** *In general, a literary work that is amusing and ends happily.* Comedy is distinct from **tragedy**, which is generally concerned with a central character who meets an unhappy or disastrous end. The comic hero or heroine may be a person of ordinary character and ability who does not usually achieve the heroic stature of the tragic figure.

Comedies are often concerned, at least in part, with poking fun at romantic attitudes and exposing human folly. They frequently depict a hero or heroine overthrowing rigid social fashions and customs. Wit, humor, and a sense of festivity are found in many comedies.

The term comedy is usually applied to a drama. Dramatic comedy is generally divided into two main sorts: romantic comedy—where there exist joyous situations and where the two chief figures are lovers; and satirical comedy—where the chief characters are held up to ridicule and often come between a pair of young lovers.

Anton Chekhov's *A Marriage Proposal* is an example of another type of comedy known as **farce**. It reveals through exaggerated situations the foolishness in which people can entangle themselves.

See **Drama, Farce, Satire**.  
See also page 404.

**COMPLICATION** *A series of difficulties forming the central action in a narrative.* Complications in a story, for example, make a conflict difficult to resolve and add interest and suspense. In Frank R. Stockton's "The Lady, or the Tiger?" complications include the search for the tiger, the princess' inquiry, and her discovery of the identity of the young woman.

See **Conflict, Plot**.  
See also page 37.

**CONFLICT** *A struggle between two opposing forces or characters in a short story, novel, play, or narrative poem.* Conflict can be **external** or **internal**, and it can take one of these forms: (1) a person against another person; (2) a person against society; (3) a person against nature; (4) two elements or ideas struggling for mastery within a person.

In a narrative there may be a single conflict that is uncomplicated and easy to recognize or there may be several, more subtle conflicts involved. In Jesse Stuart's story "Split Cherry Tree," there is conflict between the students and the farmer and their



teacher, between Dave and his father, and between the father and the teacher. There is also a larger conflict in the story between two ways of life.

See **Plot**.

See also page 29.

**CONNOTATION** *The emotion or association that a word or phrase may arouse.* Connotation is distinct from **denotation**, which is the literal or "dictionary" meaning of a word or phrase.

Words acquire their connotations by the way they've been used in the past and by the circumstances in which they've been used. For example, the word *springtime* literally means that season of the year between the vernal equinox and the summer solstice, but the word usually makes most people think of such things as youth rebirth, and romance. The word *shroud* literally means a cloth used for burial purposes, or anything that covers or protects. However, most people associate the word *shroud* with death, gloom, darkness, and other unpleasant things. Advertisers are especially sensitive to the connotations of words. For example, a department of a store probably would not be called "Cheap Clothes"; it would more likely be called "Budget Sportswear."

See **Denotation, Diction**.

See also page 305.

**CONVENTIONS** *Unrealistic devices or procedures that the reader (or audience) agrees to accept.* In poetry, for example, the use of rhyme is a convention. In drama, the playwright is free to have characters speak aloud without other characters hearing (the aside) or speak aloud while alone on stage (the soliloquy). These are dramatic conventions. The more realistic playwrights wish to be, the fewer dramatic conventions they will use; that is, they will ask the audience to suspend their disbelief as little as possible.

Familiarity with conventions of all forms enables us to know just what is taking place. Through the convention of the "fade in" and "fade out" in film, for example, we know that there has been a shift in time and place.

See **Aside, Monologue, Soliloquy**.

See also pages 405, 528.

**COUPLET** *Two consecutive lines of poetry that rhyme.* Here is the concluding couplet from William

Shakespeare's Sonnet 55:

So, till the judgment that yourself arise,  
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

This couplet is from Lord Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib":

And the might of the Gentile, unsmeared by the sword,  
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

See **Heroic Couplet**.

See page 353.

**CRISIS or TURNING POINT** *A point of great tension in a narrative that determines how the action will come out.* In Act Three of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Tybalt kills Mercutio, and Romeo kills Tybalt. These events mark the turning point of the play's action.

See **Plot**.

See also page 555.

**DENOTATION** *The literal or "dictionary" meaning of a word.* Denotation is distinct from **connotation**, which is what is suggested by a word beyond its literal meaning. For example, the denotation, or dictionary definition, of the word *star* (as in "movie star") is "a prominent actor or actress," but the connotation of the word *star* is that of an actor or actress who is adored by fans and who leads a fascinating and glamorous life.

See **Connotation, Diction**.

See also page 305.

**DESCRIPTION** *Any careful detailing of a person, place, thing, or event.* Description is one of the four major forms of discourse. We associate the term with prose, both fiction and nonfiction, but poems also use description, if a bit more economically.

Descriptions re-create sensory impressions: sights, sounds, smells, textures, tastes. Some description is direct and factual, but more often, description helps to establish a mood or stir an emotion. Here is part of the famous description of Miss Havisham in her bridal dress from Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations*:

But I saw that everything within my view which ought to be white had lost its luster, and was faded and yellow. I saw that the bride within the

bridal dress had withered like the dress, and like the flowers, and had no brightness left but the brightness of her sunken eyes. I saw that the dress had been put upon the rounded figure of a young woman, and that the figure upon which it now hung loose had shrunk to skin and bone.

See **Exposition, Narration, Persuasion**.  
See also page 209.

**DIALECT** A representation of the speech patterns of a particular region or social group. Dialect differs from the standard speech of a country in sentence pattern, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Writers often use the distinctive patterns of dialect to establish local color. Among American writers noted for their use of regional speech are James Russell Lowell, for the dialect of rustic New England; James Whitcomb Riley, for the Hoosier dialect of Indiana; Mark Twain, for the dialect of the Mississippi Valley; and Bret Harte, for the dialect of the West.

See pages 86, 137, 375.

**DICTION** A writer's choice of words, particularly for clarity, effectiveness, and precision. A writer's diction can be formal or informal, abstract or concrete. In choosing "the right word," writers must think of their subject and their audience. Words that are appropriate in informal dialogue would not always be appropriate in a formal essay. A writer might have a character use "tubby" in an insulting remark, but the word would not do in a medical article.

The impact that diction can have on a piece of writing is illustrated by the following versions of a nursery rhyme. The story is the same; the diction is different.

Three blind mice,  
See how they run.  
They all ran after the farmer's wife,  
Who cut off their tails with a carving knife.  
Have you ever seen such a sight in your life  
As three blind mice?

Three rodents with defective vision,  
Observe their rate of motion.  
They all pursued an agriculturalist's spouse,  
Who severed their spinal extremities with a  
common kitchen utensil.  
Have you ever observed such a phenomenon in  
the span of your existence  
As three rodents with defective vision?

The following poem contains no words or phrases one would consider elegant, yet the poem is eloquent. Note the impact of simple, earthy words like *soap*, *onions*, and *wet clay*, and their appropriateness in the poem.

#### Lineage

Margaret Walker

My grandmothers were strong.  
They followed plows and bent to toil.  
They moved through fields sowing seed.  
They touched earth and grain grew.  
They were full of sturdiness and singing.  
My grandmothers were strong.

My grandmothers are full of memories  
Smelling of soap and onions and wet clay  
With veins rolling roughly over quick hands  
They have many clean words to say.  
My grandmothers were strong.  
Why am I not as they?

See **Connotation, Denotation**.  
See also page 302.

**DRAMA** A story acted out, usually on a stage, by actors and actresses who take the parts of specific characters. Drama is generally divided into two types: **tragedies**, serious plays in which the central characters meet an unhappy or disastrous end, like William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*; and **comedies**, humorous plays that end happily, like Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. **Plot**, the sequence of events, is an important element of drama, as is **dialogue**, the conversations held by the characters, which serve to advance the story's action. **Stage directions** are also essential to drama, as they tell actors and actresses how to move or how they should deliver certain lines. The director of a play makes particular use of stage directions.

**Exposition**, the presentation of important background information, usually occurs at the opening of a drama (but it may occur at any point that the audience needs information about past events). A drama then introduces the **conflict**, or opposition against which the characters must struggle. In most dramas there is a **climax**, a point of great emotional intensity or suspense. Sometimes, the term *climax* is identified with the **crisis**, a decisive **turning point** that determines the outcome of the action. The end of a drama involves the **resolution**, or outcome, usu-

ally by death in a tragedy or by marriage in a comedy.

See **Plot**.

See also page 404.

**DRAMATIC IRONY** *A device whereby the audience (or reader) understands more of a situation or of what is being said than the character is aware of.* Such speech or action has great significance to the audience or reader and little significance to the character speaking or performing it. The character remains unaware of the real state of affairs. Dramatic irony is a common device for involving the reader in the story's action.

See **Irony**.

See also pages 68, 570.

**DRAMATIC POETRY** *Poetry in which one or more characters speak.* Each speaker always addresses a specific listener. This listener may be silent (but identifiable), or the listener may be another character who speaks in reply.

In "Lord Randal," there are two speakers, Lord Randal and his mother:

"O where hae ye been, Lord Randal my son?

O where hae ye been, my handsome young man?"

"I hae been to the wild wood; mother, make my bed soon,

For I'm weary wi' hunting, and fain wald lie down."

See **Narrative Poetry, Poetry**.

See also page 391.

**DYNAMIC CHARACTER** *A character who undergoes an important and basic change in personality or outlook.*

See **Characters**.

See also page 74.

**EPIC** *A long narrative poem that relates the deeds of a hero.* Epics incorporate myth, legend, folk tale, and history, and usually reflect the values of the societies from which they originate. The tone is generally grand, and the heroes and their adventures appear larger than life.

Many epics were drawn from an oral tradition and are known as **primary epics**. These were transmit-

ted by song and recitation before they were written down. Two of the most famous primary epics of Western civilization are Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Another primary epic is one of the earliest works in history, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, from ancient Mesopotamia.

A second type of epic is the **literary** or **secondary epic**. These were written down from the start. Examples include the *Aeneid*, Rome's national epic written by the poet Virgil to give the ancient Romans a sense of their own destiny; the *Divine Comedy*, the great epic of the Middle Ages written by the Italian poet Dante; and *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, two great epics written by the seventeenth-century English poet John Milton.

See **Narrative Poetry**.

See also page 592.

**EPITHET** *A descriptive adjective or phrase used to characterize someone or something.* Examples are "yellow-bellied coward," "Catherine the Great," and "Richard the Lion-Hearted." Homer's *Odyssey* is filled with epithets, such as "raider of cities" (a reference to Odysseus) and "father of gods and men" (a reference to Zeus).

See page 654.

**ESSAY** *A piece of prose writing, usually short, that deals with a subject in a limited way and expresses a particular point of view.* An essay is never a comprehensive treatment of a subject (the word comes from a French word for "attempt" or "try"). An essay may be serious or humorous, tightly organized or rambling, restrained or emotional.

The two general classifications of essay are the **informal essay** (also called the **familiar** or **personal essay**) and the **formal essay**. The informal essay is conversational and personal, often revealing a great deal of the writer's personality. The formal essay is more serious in tone and usually objective. Its topics are often drawn from philosophy, literature, or history. However, many essays cannot be easily pigeonholed. For instance, even where the style is formal and seemingly impersonal, the writer may reveal much of his or her personality and point of view.

See **Exposition, Nonfiction**.

See also pages 216, 231.

**EXPOSITION** *The kind of writing that is intended primarily to present information.* Exposition is one of



the major forms of discourse. Although it is used in fiction as well as nonfiction, the most familiar form it takes is in essays. The commentaries which introduce the major sections in this book are exposition.

**Exposition** is also that part of a play in which important background information is revealed to the audience. In *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, William Shakespeare begins by giving us essential information about the Montagues and the Capulets. He presents the conflict between these two houses before introducing the love story.

See **Description, Essay, Narration, Persuasion, Plot.**

See also pages, 37, 289, 476, 554.

**FABLE** *A brief story or poem that is told to present a moral, or practical lesson.* The characters in fables are often animals who speak or act like human beings. The best-known fables are those attributed to Aesop, who is said to have lived around the sixth century B.C. The following fable of the tortoise and the hare is characteristic of Aesop's terse style and clearly stated moral:

The tortoise and the hare argued about who was swifter, and they agreed to run a race. The hare sprinted out well ahead of the tortoise. Seeing how slow his adversary was, the hare became so confident that he relaxed and even lay down for a nap by the roadside. Meanwhile, the tortoise plodded on without stopping, passed the hare asleep on the road, and got to the finish line first.

**MORAL:** *Slow and steady wins the race.*

Another master of this form is the seventeenth-century French writer Jean de la Fontaine. La Fontaine took many of his stories from Aesop but translated them into verse. "The Fox and the Crow" is a fable that La Fontaine adapted from Aesop. Here a modern poet has translated the fable into English, preserving the wit and charm of La Fontaine's version:

**The Fox and the Crow**  
Marianne Moore

On his airy perch among the branches  
Master Crow was holding cheese in his beak.  
Master Fox, whose pose suggested fragrances,  
Said in language which of course I cannot  
speak,

"Aha, superb Sir Ebony, well met.  
How black! who else boasts your metallic jet!  
If your warbling were unique,  
Rest assured, as you are sleek,  
One would say that our wood had hatched  
nightingales."  
All aglow, Master Crow tried to run a few scales,  
Risking trills and intervals,  
Dropping the prize as his huge beak sang false.  
The fox pounced on the cheese and remarked,  
"My dear sir,  
Learn that every flatterer  
Lives at the flattered listener's cost:  
A lesson worth more than the cheese that you lost."  
The tardy learner, smarting under ridicule,  
Swore he'd learned his last lesson as somebody's  
fool.

Essayists and humorists such as James Thurber and E. B. White have added new twists to the fable.

**FALLING ACTION** *All of the action in a play that follows the turning point.* The falling action leads to the **resolution** or conclusion of the play. In William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the fortunes of the two lovers steadily decline following the deaths of Mercutio and of Tybalt in Act Three. The action "falls" until the final catastrophe.

See **Plot.**

See also page 555.

**FARCE** *A type of comedy based on a farfetched humorous situation, often with ridiculous or stereotyped characters.* The humor in a farce is often slapstick—that is, the clowning frequently involves crude physical action. The characters in a farce are often the butts of practical jokes: pies are thrown at their faces or beds cave in on them.

These elements of exaggeration and absurdity set farce apart from other forms of comedy. Anton Chekhov wrote a number of farces, including *A Marriage Proposal*, *The Bear*, and *The Anniversary*.

See **Comedy.**

See also pages 404, 421.

**FICTION** *Anything that is invented or imagined, especially a prose narrative.* Although fiction may be based on actual events or personal experiences, its characters and settings are invented. Even if a story is set in an actual place and involves recognizable characters

or details, we understand the story itself to be fictitious. In literature, fiction generally refers to the **novel** or the **short story**.

See page 216.

**FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE** *Language that is not intended to be interpreted in a literal sense.* Figurative language always makes use of a comparison between different things. By appealing to the imagination, figurative language provides new ways of looking at the world.

The interpretation of a poem often depends upon recognizing its figurative meaning. In the following poem, for example, the “poor chap” has not drowned in water, but in loneliness. He is the “I” who speaks in the first and last stanzas.

#### **Not Waving but Drowning**

*Stevie Smith*

Nobody heard him, the dead man,  
But still he lay moaning:  
I was much further out than you thought  
And not waving but drowning.

Poor chap, he always loved larking  
And now he's dead  
It must have been too cold for him his heart gave  
way,  
They said.

Oh, no no no, it was too cold always  
(Still the dead one lay moaning)  
I was much too far out all my life  
And not waving but drowning.

Figurative language consists of **figures of speech**. The main figure of speech used in literature is **metaphor**. Metaphor draws a comparison between two unlike things without the use of any special language.

Another frequently used figure of speech is **simile**. A simile draws a comparison between two unlike things through the use of the words *like*, *as*, *as if*, *than*, *such as*, and other specific words of comparison. Similes in everyday speech are common. “His voice sounds *like* a foghorn” is a simile in which the sound of a person's voice is compared to the sound of a foghorn. Other examples are “He eats *like* a bird” and “She was *as* cool *as* a cucumber.” A well-known simile from literature is William Wordsworth's line, “I wandered lonely *as* a cloud.”

Another form of figurative language is **personification**. Personification invests something nonhuman with human qualities. In “The Day Is Done,” Henry Wadsworth Longfellow personifies “cares” by describing them as people who can gather up their belongings and walk away:

And the cares, that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently steal away.

See pages 163, 300, 318, 507.

**FIGURE OF SPEECH** *A term applied to a specific kind of figurative language, such as metaphor or simile.* Everyday language abounds with many different figures of speech, in which we say one thing and mean another.

Frequently figures of speech compare some action or feeling to something else, as in, “He eats like a bird.” Or they may express exaggeration, as in, “I’ll die if I don’t go to the dance.” They may substitute a part of a thing for a whole, as in using “the stage” to mean the entire theatrical profession. Or they may assign personality to an animal or something that is inanimate, as in “the sea is angry.” There are more than two hundred different kinds of figures of speech.

See **Figurative Language**.  
See also page 318.

**FLASHBACK** *A scene in a short story, novel, play, or narrative poem that interrupts the action to show an event that happened at an earlier time.* Many narratives present events as they occur in time—that is, in chronological order. Sometimes, however, a writer interrupts this natural sequence of events and “flashes back” to a past event to tell the reader or audience what happened earlier in the story or in a character's life.

Homer uses flashback in the *Odyssey*. Odysseus, before making his return home, recounts to the King of Phaeacia “those years of rough adventure,” his journey of ten years.

**FOIL** *A character who sets off another character by contrast.* By heightening the differences between two characters, a writer dramatizes the significance of both characters. For example, in the opening scene of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Benvolio,

who attempts to keep peace, is a foil for Tybalt, who wants to continue fighting.

See pages 506, 528.

**FOLK BALLAD** *A story told in verse that is by an unknown author and meant to be sung.* "Lord Randal" is a famous folk ballad.

See **Ballad**.

See also pages 384, 386, 388.

**FOLK TALE** *An account, legend, or story that is passed along orally from generation to generation.* Folk tales are of unknown authorship. They may be legends connected to historical figures, as is the story of George Washington and the cherry tree, or they may be fanciful accounts of the supernatural. In this last category fall stories of ghosts, of devils and spirits, of witches, of talking animals, and of legendary heroes, such as Paul Bunyan.

**FORESHADOWING** *The use of hints or clues in a narrative to suggest what action is to come.* Foreshadowing helps to build suspense in a story because it suggests what is about to happen. It also helps the reader savor all the details of the buildup. Foreshadowing is common in short stories, novels, and drama.

In "The Most Dangerous Game," Richard Connell foreshadows the major action of the story in the conversation between Rainsford and Whitney. Their talk of fear, death, superstition, and evil builds suspense at the outset.

See **Plot, Suspense**.

See also page 29.

**FRAMEWORK STORY** *A narrative that contains another narrative.* Both the framework story and the inner story add meaning to one another, and one is usually important to the outcome of the other. *The Canterbury Tales*, written by the fourteenth-century English poet Geoffrey Chaucer, is a famous example of several stories within a story.

See page 61.

**FREE VERSE** *Poetry that has no fixed meter or pattern and that depends on natural speech rhythms.* Free verse may rhyme or not rhyme; its lines may be of different lengths; and like natural speech, it may switch suddenly from one rhythm to another.

When used by a skillful poet, free verse displays special rhythms and melodies unlike any traditional forms. Other than the fact that it is arranged by lines, free verse is very much like rhythmical prose. The following lines are from "The Dismantled Ship," a poem by Walt Whitman, who was the first poet to use free verse extensively.

In some unused lagoon, some nameless bay,  
On sluggish, lonesome waters, anchored near  
the shore,  
An old, dismasted, gray and battered ship,  
disabled, done,  
After free voyages to all the seas of earth,  
hauled up at last and hawsered tight,  
Lies rusting, moldering.

See **Meter, Poetry**.

See also page 355.

**HEROIC COUPLET** *Two consecutive lines of rhyming poetry that are written in iambic pentameter and that contain a complete thought.* In a heroic couplet, there is usually one pause at the end of the first line, and another heavier pause at the end of the second line. The form was often used in England for heroic or epic poetry.

William Shakespeare frequently uses the heroic couplet. Here is an example from Act Two of *Romeo and Juliet*:

Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell,  
His help to crave and my dear hap to tell.

See **Couplet**.

See also page 528.

**HOMERIC SIMILE** *An extended comparison that mounts in excitement and usually ends in a climax.* The Homeric simile is also known as the epic simile.

See **Epic, Simile**.

See also page 654.

**IAMBIC PENTAMETER** *The most common verse line in English poetry.* It consists of five verse **feet** (*penta-* is from a Greek word meaning "five"), with each foot an **iamb**—that is, an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. William Shakespeare's plays are written almost entirely in iambic pentameter. Here is an example from *Romeo and Juliet*:



Alack / the day! / He's gone, / he's killed, / he's  
dead.

See **Meter, Rhythm.**  
See also page 528.

**IMAGERY** *Language that appeals to any sense or any combination of senses.* Most imagery tends to be visual in nature, but imagery may also suggest the way things sound, smell, taste, or feel to the touch. Imagery is put to particularly effective use in poetry. A skillful poet will carefully choose words that convey the most vivid images. The following poem conveys an experience entirely through images—those of touch, sight, and sound:

**The Pond**  
Amy Lowell

Cold, wet leaves  
Floating on moss-colored water,  
And the croaking of frogs—  
Cracked bell-notes in the twilight.

Writers who use imagery extensively make an experience more intense for us. Good images involve our sensory awareness and help us to be more responsive readers.

See page 308.

**INVERSION** *A reversal of the usual order of words to achieve some kind of emphasis.* In "The Lotus-Eaters" Tennyson writes:

And, like a downward smoke, the slender  
stream  
Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

It would be more common to write: "And, like a downward smoke, the slender stream seemed to fall and pause and fall along the cliff."

Inversion usually appears in poetry, but it occurs in prose and in speech as well. The effect of its slightly unexpected quality is to give special importance to a phrase or thought. It may also be used to produce effective rhyme.

See page 322.

**IRONY** *A contrast or an incongruity between what is stated and what is really meant, or between what is expected to happen and what actually does happen.* Two kinds of irony are: (1) **verbal irony**, in which a writer or speaker says one thing and means something en-

tirely different; and (2) **dramatic irony**, in which a reader or an audience perceives something that a character in the story or play does not know.

The following tongue-in-cheek statement by Mark Twain is an example of verbal irony. Twain's actual meaning is quite different from his surface meaning:

When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years.

An example of dramatic irony is found in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The audience of the play knows that Juliet is not dead but is merely drugged and appears lifeless. Romeo, however, does not know this. Presuming that his young wife is dead, Romeo kills himself.

See pages 37, 44, 68, 178.

**LITERAL LANGUAGE** *A fact or idea stated directly.* When a writer intends something to be understood exactly as it is written, he or she is using literal, or nonfigurative, language.

See **Figurative Language.**

**LITERARY BALLAD** *A story told in verse in which a known writer imitates a folk ballad.* "All in green went my love riding" by E. E. Cummings is a literary ballad.

See **Ballad.**

See also pages 387, 388.

**LYRIC POETRY** *Poetry that expresses a speaker's personal thoughts or feelings.* The elegy, ode, and sonnet are forms of the lyric. As its Greek name indicates, a lyric was originally a poem sung to the accompaniment of a lyre, and lyrics to this day have retained a melodic quality. Lyrics may express a range of emotions and reflections: Robert Burns's "John Anderson My Jo" expresses emotions of deep love, while Robert Frost's lyric "Desert Places" expresses the loneliness and fright the speaker feels when looking at a winter landscape.

See **Poetry, Sonnet.**  
See also page 374.

**METAPHOR** *A comparison between two unlike things with the intent of giving added meaning to one of them.*

Metaphor is one of the most important forms of **figurative language**. It is used in virtually all forms of literature. "Life is a dream," "Life is a vale of tears," "Life is a bowl of cherries" are all examples of metaphor. Unlike a **simile**, a metaphor does not use a connective word such as *like*, *as*, *than*, or *resembles* to state a comparison.

In the following poem, Eve Merriam does not say that morning is like a new sheet of paper, but rather that morning is a new sheet of paper. Her comparison is intended to point out that in every morning we can find a fresh, clean beginning.

**Metaphor**  
Eve Merriam

Morning is  
a new sheet of paper  
for you to write on.

Whatever you want to say,  
all day,  
until night  
folds it up  
and files it away.

The bright words and the dark words  
are gone  
until dawn  
and a new day  
to write on.

Many metaphors are implied, or suggested. An **implied metaphor** does not directly state that one thing is another, different thing. Homer uses an implied metaphor in the *Odyssey* when he describes the dawn as having "fingertips of rose." This implies that dawn is a woman with rose-tipped fingers that stretch across the morning sky.

See **Figurative Language, Simile**.  
See also pages 322, 325.

**METER** A generally regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in poetry. In these lines from Edgar Allan Poe's "Eldorado," the stressed syllables are marked (◌) and the unstressed (◌):

Gaily be◌dight,  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow

Meter is measured in units called **feet**. A foot consists of one stressed syllable and, usually, of one or

more unstressed syllables. A line of poetry has as many feet as it has stressed syllables. Standard poetic feet include: **iamb**, one unstressed syllable followed by one stressed syllable (Būt sŏft!); **trochee**, one stressed syllable followed by one unstressed syllable (gállant); **dactyl**, one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables (híckŏry); and **anapest**, two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable (ünderstand).

A metrical line is named for its pattern and number of feet: **iambic pentameter** (5 iambs); **trochaic tetrameter** (4 trochees); **dactylic hexameter** (6 dactyls); **anapestic trimeter** (3 anapests), and so on.

See **Rhythm**.  
See also page 336.

**MONOLOGUE** A long, uninterrupted speech (in a narrative or drama) that is spoken in the presence of other characters. Unlike a soliloquy and most asides, a monologue is heard by the other characters present. The characters in William Shakespeare's plays often deliver monologues. Mercutio's speech on Queen Mab in Act One, Scene 4 of *Romeo and Juliet* is an example.

See **Aside, Conventions, Soliloquy**.  
See also page 528.

**NARRATION** The kind of writing or speaking that tells a story (a narrative). Narration is one of the four major forms of discourse. Any narrative must be delivered by a narrator, whether it is the author or a character created by the author. Narration may take the form of prose or poetry. A narrative may be book length, such as a novel or an epic, or it may be paragraph length, such as a fable or an anecdote. The short stories, the ballads and other narrative poems, the epic, and the novel in this book are all examples of narration.

See **Description, Exposition, Persuasion**.  
See also page 210.

**NARRATIVE POETRY** Poetry that tells a story. One kind of narrative poem is the **epic**, a long poem which sets forth the heroic ideals of a particular society. Homer's *Odyssey* is an epic. The **ballad** is another kind of narrative poem. "Lord Randal" is an example of a ballad.

See **Ballad, Epic, Poetry**.  
See also page 384.

**NARRATOR** *One who narrates, or tells, a story.* A writer may choose to have a story told by a **first-person narrator**, someone who is either a major or minor character. Or, a writer may choose to use a **third-person narrator**, someone who is not in the story at all. Third-person narrators are often **omniscient**, or “all-knowing”—that is, they are able to enter into the minds of all the characters in the story.

Jesse Stuart’s short story “Split Cherry Tree” is told by an “I” who is one of the characters in the story. This narrator can reveal his own thoughts, of course, but he can report only what he thinks goes on in the minds of the other characters. Thus, we know only what the narrator tells us. Frank R. Stockton’s short story “The Lady, or the Tiger?” is told by a third-person narrator. The author serves as an omniscient observer who steps outside the action of the story to address the reader.

See **Point of View**.

See also pages 101, 124, 137.

**NONFICTION** *Any prose narrative that tells about things as they actually happened or that presents factual information about something.* **Autobiography** and **biography** are among the major forms of nonfiction. The purpose of this kind of writing is to give a presumably accurate accounting of a person’s life. **Essays** are also common forms of nonfiction. They are generally personal observations on some subject. Other kinds of nonfiction include the stories, editorials, and letters to the editor found in newspapers, as well as diaries, journals, and travel literature.

Writers of nonfiction use the major forms of discourse: description (an impression of the subject); narration (the telling of the story); exposition (explanatory information); and persuasion (an argument to influence people’s thinking).

See page 216.

**NOVEL** *A fictional narrative in prose, generally longer than a short story.* The author is not restricted by historical facts but rather is free to create fictional personalities in a fictional world. The characters may be recognizable and disguised with fictitious names, or the real names of actual historical figures may be used. The setting and action of the story, no matter how detailed, are also invented, but may be based on actual places and drawn from little-known or well-known facts.

The subject matter of the novel is virtually unrestricted, and the forms the novel may take cover a wide range. For example, there are the **historical novel**, in which historical figures appear or in which characters, settings, and periods are drawn in such detail, one feels they are real; the **picaresque novel**, a kind of travel story, often satiric and usually presenting the exploits of a rogue; and the **psychological novel**, in which the characters’ complex emotional and intellectual states are the focus. These are but a few of the traditional forms of the novel. Some of the many modern forms include the **detective story**, the **spy thriller**, and the **science-fiction novel**. Classifications constantly overlap, and new forms develop. Perhaps no other form of literature has undergone so much change.

See **Fiction, Short Story**.

See also page 666.

**OCTAVE** *The first eight lines of a Petrarchan (or Italian) sonnet.* The octave, from the Latin word for “eight,” often has the rhyme scheme *abbaabba*. A thought or idea is often introduced in the octave and further developed in the last six lines, or **sestet**, of the poem.

See **Sestet, Sonnet**.

See also page 351.

**ONOMATOPOEIA** *The use of a word whose sound in some degree imitates or suggests its meaning.* The names of some birds are onomatopoeic, imitating the cry of the bird named: *cuckoo, whippoorwill, owl, crow, towhee, bobwhite*. Some onomatopoeic words are *hiss, clang, rustle, and snap*.

See **Alliteration, Assonance**.

See also page 343.

**PARALLELISM** *The use of phrases, clauses, or sentences that are similar or complementary in structure or in meaning.* In “The Destruction of Sennacherib,” Lord Byron constructs the second stanza so that the first line is parallel to the third, and the second line parallel to the fourth:

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is  
green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were  
seen:  
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath  
blown,



That host on the morrow lay withered and  
strown.

The technique of parallelism is used extensively in the Psalms in the Bible, where the idea of one line is repeated in the next. These lines from Psalm 96 are examples:

Give unto the Lord glory and strength.  
Give unto the Lord the glory due his name.

See page 346.

**PARAPHRASE** *A summary or recapitulation of a piece of literature.* A paraphrase does not enhance a literary work. It merely tells in the simplest form what happened. A paraphrase of Christina Rossetti's poem "Uphill" might go this way:

A traveler about to make a journey (the journey of life) inquires about the direction of the road and the length of the trip. The answer reveals that the road winds uphill (through life's struggles) and the journey takes "the whole long day" (a lifetime). The traveler next asks if there will be a place to spend the night and is told there will certainly be an inn. Inquiring if there will be others who have made the same trip (through life to death) and what welcome to expect, the traveler is assured of company and a ready greeting. And, in response to questions regarding comfort and the available supply of beds (graves), the traveler is informed that both may be expected by all those who need them.

This summary gives us some essential information and is useful for checking to see just what did happen. But it is also clear that such a paraphrase is not memorable, nor does it produce the powerful symbolic effect of the original poem.

See page 399.

**PERSONIFICATION** *A figure of speech in which an animal, an object, a natural force, or an idea is given personality, or described as if it were human.* In the following line from "Dirge," Percy Bysshe Shelley personifies a storm. He addresses it as if it were a person who could feel sadness and shed tears: "Sad storm, whose tears are vain."

See **Figurative Language, Figure of Speech.**  
See also pages 238, 300, 327, 507.

**PERSUASION** *The type of speaking or writing that is intended to make its audience adopt a certain opinion or perform an action or do both.* Persuasion is one of the major forms of discourse. Modern examples of persuasion include political speeches, television commercials, and newspaper editorials.

See **Argument, Description, Exposition, Narration.**

See also page 216.

**PETRARCHAN SONNET** *A fourteen-line lyric poem consisting of two parts: the octave (or first eight lines) and the sestet (or last six lines).* The Petrarchan, or Italian, sonnet originated in Italy in the thirteenth century and was much used by the Italian poet Francesco Petrarch. Its rhyme scheme is *abbaabba cdecde*.

The following poem is a Petrarchan sonnet. Note the variation in the sestet, where the rhyme scheme is *eddcdd*.

#### I Wish I Could Remember That First Day

Christina Rossetti

a I wish I could remember that first day,  
b First hour, first moment of your meeting me,  
b If bright or dim the season, it might be  
a Summer or Winter for aught I can say;  
a So unrecorded did it slip away,  
b So blind was I to see and to foresee,  
b So dull to mark the budding of my tree  
a That would not blossom yet for many a May.  
c If only I could recollect it, such  
d A day of days! I let it come and go  
d As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;  
c It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;  
c If only now I could recall that touch,  
d First touch of hand in hand—Did one but know!

See **Sonnet.**

See also page 351.

**PLOT** *The sequence of events or happenings in a literary work.* Plots may be simple or complex, loosely constructed or close-knit. But every plot is made up of a series of incidents that are related to one another.

**Conflict**, a struggle of some kind, is the most impor-

tant element of plot. Conflict may be **external** or **internal**. External conflict is a clash between two or more characters, between characters and society, or between characters and nature. Internal conflict is a struggle within the mind of a character. There may be more than one form of conflict in a work. All the elements of the conflict are incorporated into the plot. As the plot advances, we learn how the conflict is resolved, either through the action or through major changes in the attitudes or personalities of the characters.

Action is generally introduced by a section of **exposition**, information essential to understanding the work. The exposition is part of the **rising action**, during which there is often a **complication**, a point where the central character meets some opposition. The action rises to a **crisis**, or **turning point**.

**The falling action** follows the turning point. The end of the action is the **dénouement** (literally “unknotting”) or **resolution**, the moment in the plot when the conflict ends. Not all plots have a resolution as such. In older stories, there generally is a resolution. But many modern stories end without a resolution. They provide us with enough information so that we may draw our own inferences as to how the conflict will be resolved.

One or several **subplots** may be interwoven with the main action. Several subsidiary plots are common in a novel.

See the terms noted above.  
See also pages 2, 37, 554.

**POETRY** *Traditional poetry is language arranged in lines, with a regular rhythm and often a definite rhyme scheme. Nontraditional poetry does away with regular rhythm and rhyme, although it usually is set up in lines. The richness of its suggestions, the sounds of its words, and the strong feelings evoked by its lines are often said to be what distinguish poetry from other forms of literature. Poetry is difficult to define, but most people know when they read it.*

Lines of poetry are often arranged in **stanzas**. Through the use of **rhyme** and strong **rhythms**, poetry establishes certain feelings and effects; through the use of **imagery**, poetry suggests things we can know through our senses; and through the use of **figurative language**, poetry adds special meanings by comparison. Techniques used to build musicality

or to emphasize meaning include **alliteration**, **assonance**, **onomatopoeia**, **repetition**, and **inversion**.

See the terms noted above.  
See also page 294.

**POINT OF VIEW** *The vantage point from which a narrative is told.* There are two basic points of view. In the **first-person point of view**, the story is told by one of the characters in his or her own words, that is from the “I” vantage point. First-person point of view is a limited point of view, since the reader is told only what this character knows and observes. The author’s use of this vantage point adds a sense of immediacy to a work. Here is an example of first-person point of view from Charles Dickens’ novel *Great Expectations*.

My father’s family name being Pirrip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing more explicit than Pip. So I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

In the **third-person point of view**, the narrator tells the story from the vantage point of “he” or “she.” The third-person narrator might be an **omniscient**, or all-knowing, observer who can describe all the characters and actions in the story as well as comment on what the characters think and feel. O. Henry’s story “The Gift of the Magi” is written from an omniscient point of view:

Now there were two possessions of the James Dillingham Youngs in which they both took a mighty pride. One was Jim’s gold watch that had been his father’s and his grandfather’s. The other was Della’s hair. Had the Queen of Sheba lived in the flat across the air shaft, Della would have let her hair hang out the window someday to dry, just to depreciate Her Majesty’s jewels and gifts. Had King Solomon been the janitor, with all his treasures piled up in the basement, Jim would have pulled out his watch every time he passed, just to see him pluck at his beard from envy.

An author might also tell a story in the third-person from the point of view of only one character. A **limited third-person point of view** is used in “Before the End of Summer,” in which everything is told from Bennie’s vantage point.

See **Narrator**.  
See also pages 101, 124, 137.

**PUN** Usually, the humorous use of a word or phrase to suggest two or more meanings at the same time. William Shakespeare's play *Richard III* opens with a famous pun:

Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York.

The "sun of York" is a reference to Edward IV, son of the Duke of York, who also had as his emblem the sun.

Sometimes puns are used seriously. The poet John Donne, in his "Hymn to God the Father," puns on the word *Son* (which has the double meaning of *Christ* and *the sun*) and on the word *done* (which is also the poet's name):

But swear by Thy self, that at my death Thy Son  
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;  
And having done that, Thou hast done.

See page 586.

**QUATRAIN** Usually, a stanza or poem of four lines. However, a quatrain may also be any group of four lines unified by a rhyme scheme. Quatrains usually follow an *abab*, *abba*, or *abcb* rhyme scheme. Here is a quatrain from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Day Is Done":

*a* And the night shall be filled with music,  
*b* And the cares, that infest the day,  
*c* Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
*b* And as silently steal away.

Shakespeare's sonnets are always divided into three quatrains and a couplet, or two rhyming lines.

See **Stanza**.  
See also page 353.

**REFRAIN** A word, phrase, line, or group of lines repeated regularly in a poem, usually at the end of each stanza. Refrains are often used in ballads and other narrative poems to create a songlike rhythm and to help build suspense. Refrains can also serve to emphasize a particular idea. This refrain is used in "Lord Randal":

" . . . For I'm weary wi' hunting;  
and fain wald lie down."

See **Repetition**.  
See also page 382.

**REPETITION** The return of a word, phrase, stanza form, or effect in any form of literature. Repetition is an effective literary device that may bring comfort, suggest order, or add special meaning to a piece of literature. Common forms of repetition are **alliteration**, repeating sounds at the beginning, middle, or end of words; **rhyme**; and **refrain**.

One of the great masters of repetition is Edgar Allan Poe, who worked out theories of how poetry affects a reader. He concluded that simple repetition was one of the most important and functional devices a poet could use. In his poem "Eldorado," which is filled with ghostly images, Poe repeats the word *shadow* in every stanza. Such repetitions build emotional tension.

In the following poem, note how the repetition of words and phrases builds tension:

**If something should happen**  
*Lucille Clifton*

for instance  
if the sea should break  
and crash against the decks  
and below decks break the cargo  
against the sides of the sea  
or  
if the chains should break  
and crash against the decks  
and below decks break the sides  
of the sea  
or  
if the seas of cities  
should crash against each other  
and break the chains  
and break the walls holding down the cargo  
and break the sides of the seas  
and all the waters of the earth wash together  
in a rush of breaking  
where will the captains run and  
to what harbor?

Sometimes a poet will repeat a phrase or part of a line, as in these lines from Robert Burns's "Sweet Afton," written after the death of his sweetheart:

Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green  
braes!  
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise!  
My Mary's asleep by thy murmuring stream –



Flow gently, sweet Afton, disturb not her dream!

See **Alliteration, Assonance, Refrain, Rhyme.**

**RESOLUTION** *The outcome of the conflict in a play or story. The resolution concludes the falling action.*

See **Plot.**

See also pages 37, 555.

**RHYME** *The repetition of sound in two or more words or phrases that usually appear close to each other in a poem. For example: river/shiver, song/long, leap/deep. If the rhyme occurs at the ends of lines, it is called end rhyme. Here is an example of end rhyme from Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Music":*

It is not only in the *rose*,  
It is not only in the *bird*,  
Not only where the rainbow *glows*,  
Nor in the song of woman *heard*,  
But in the darkest, meanest *things*  
There always, always something *sings*.

If the rhyme occurs within a line, it is called **internal rhyme**. Here is an example of internal rhyme from Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "Bugle Song":

The splendor *falls* on castle *walls*

**Approximate rhyme** (or **near rhyme** or **partial rhyme**) is rhyme in which the final sounds of the words are similar, but not identical (as opposed to **exact rhyme**). *Cook/look* is an exact rhyme; *cook/lack* is an approximate rhyme. Rudyard Kipling uses approximate rhyme in these lines from "Recessional":

For frantic boast and foolish *word*—  
Thy Mercy on Thy People, *Lord!*

Rhymes in the work of any careful poet serve many purposes: one is to increase the musicality of the poem; another is to give delight by fulfilling our expectation of a recurring sound; a third purpose is humor. Clever rhymes, for example those in this limerick, produce a comic effect:

There was a young lady of Lynn  
Who was so uncommonly thin  
That when she essayed  
To drink lemonade  
She slipped through the straw and fell in.

See **Poetry, Repetition, Rhyme Scheme.**  
See also page 341.

**RHYME SCHEME** *The pattern of rhymes in a poem. The rhyme scheme (indicated by a different letter of the alphabet for each new rhyme) of the first stanza of William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" is repeated in each succeeding stanza and gives structure to the poem:*

*a* I wandered lonely as a cloud  
*b* That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
*a* When all at once I saw a crowd,  
*b* A host, of golden daffodils.  
*c* Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
*c* Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

See **Poetry, Rhyme.**  
See also page 341.

**RHYTHM** *The arrangement of stressed and unstressed syllables into a pattern. Rhythm is most apparent in poetry, though it is part of all good writing. Rhythm often gives a poem a certain musical quality. Rhythm may be used to imitate the action being described and thus help to communicate the writer's meaning. In Lord Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib," the lines actually imitate the swooping and blowing of a swift, cold wind:*

För the Ängel öf Death sprëäd his wings öñ the bläst,  
Äñd breäthed ïñ the fáce öf the föe äs hë passed;  
Äñd the eyes öf the sleepërs wäxed deädly äñd chïll,  
Äñd theïr hearts büť öñce heävëd, äñd förevërgrew stïll!

When the rhythm of a poem has a regular (instead of an irregular) pattern of stressed (♂) and unstressed (♀) syllables, this pattern is called **meter**. Good poets usually put stress on the most important words in the line. Stressed words may be accented by having them also alliterate: *face/foe; hearts/heaved*.

In addition to meter, poets use other techniques to intensify rhythm. **Rhyme** contributes to rhythm by causing us to feel that a passage has come to an end. When rhymes fall close together, we have the feeling that we must pause in our reading of the lines.

Another powerful means of building rhythm is through **repetition**. In these lines from Sidney Lanier's "Song of the Chattahoochee," the repeti-

tion of the word *abide* echoes the plants' and trees' coaxing of the river to stay:

The rushes cried *Abide, abide*,  
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,  
The laving laurel turned my tide,  
The ferns and the fondling grass said  
    *Stay*,  
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,  
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide*,  
    *Here in the hills of Habersham,*  
    *Here in the valleys of Hall.*

See **Meter, Repetition, Rhyme.**  
See also page 336.

**RISING ACTION** *Those events in a play that lead to a turning point in the action.* In William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the rising action begins when Romeo and Juliet declare their love and concludes with the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt.

See **Plot.**  
See also page 554.

**SATIRE** *A kind of writing that holds up to ridicule or contempt the weaknesses and wrongdoings of individuals, groups, institutions, or humanity in general.* The aim of most satirists is to set a moral standard for society, and they often attempt to persuade the reader to see their point of view through the force of laughter. The laughter may be achieved by a light and witty tone or through bitter irony. In "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," James Thurber satirizes the modern individual, who daydreams of being a romantic hero while living a humdrum existence. In *Visit to a Small Planet*, Gore Vidal satirizes hypocrisy in human nature.

See **Comedy, Irony.**  
See also pages 423, 447.

**SESTET** *The last six lines of a Petrarchan (or Italian) sonnet.* The sestet, from the Latin word for "six," usually has a rhyme scheme of *cdecde*. A thought or idea that is introduced in the first eight lines, or **octave**, of the poem is sometimes further developed in the sestet.

See **Octave, Sonnet.**  
See also page 351.

**SETTING** *The time and place of action in a narrative.* In short stories, novels, poetry, and nonfiction, setting is generally created by description. In drama, setting is usually established by stage directions and dialogue.

Setting can be of great importance in establishing not only physical background but also mood or emotional intensity. In turn, the mood contributes to the plot and theme of the narrative. For example, in the opening chapter of *Great Expectations*, Charles Dickens uses the setting to create a mood of bleakness:

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within twenty miles of the sea. My first vivid impression of things seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon toward evening. At such a time I found out for certain that this bleak place was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and Georgiana, wife of the above, were dead and buried. I knew that the dark flat wilderness beyond was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond was the river; and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry was Pip.

See **Plot, Theme.**  
See also page 144.

**SHAKESPEAREAN SONNET** *A fourteen-line lyric poem consisting of three quatrains (four-line stanzas) and a concluding couplet (two rhyming lines).* The Shakespearean, or English, sonnet was not invented by William Shakespeare, but is named for him because he is its most famous practitioner. Its rhyme scheme is *abab cdcd efef gg*. Here is one of Shakespeare's best-known sonnets:

#### Sonnet 18

- a* Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
*b* Thou art more lovely and more temperate:  
*a* Rough winds do shake the darling buds of  
    May,  
*b* And summer's lease hath all too short a date;  
*c* Sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines,  
*d* And often is his gold complexion dimmed;  
*c* And every fair from fair sometimes declines,  
*d* By chance, or nature's changing course, un-  
    trimmed.

e But thy eternal summer shall not fade  
 f Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;  
 e Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his  
 shade,  
 f When in eternal lines to time thou growest –  
 g So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,  
 g So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

See **Sonnet**.

See also page 353.

**SHORT STORY** *Narrative prose fiction that is shorter than a novel.* Biblical stories, Greek myths, legends, and fables are the ancestors of the short story, but the name itself was not used until the nineteenth century. Edgar Allan Poe is regarded by many as the originator of this form as it is known today.

Short stories vary in length. Some are no longer than five hundred words; others run to forty or fifty thousand words. An extended short story is sometimes referred to as a **novelette**, or, when slightly longer, as a **novella**.

The major difference between a short story and longer fictional forms, such as the **novel**, is that the main literary elements — **plot, setting, characterization** — are used with greater compression in the short story than in the longer forms.

See **Fiction, Novel**.

See also page 2.

**SIMILE** *A comparison made between two dissimilar things through the use of a specific word of comparison, such as like, as, than, or resembles.* The comparison must be between two essentially unlike things. To say “Dorothy is like her grandmother” is not to use a simile. But to say “Dorothy is like a golden flower” is to use a simile. Like all **figures of speech**, similes help us to see things in vivid, new ways.

Note how similes are used in the following poem to emphasize visions of beauty, purity, and tranquility.

**Velvet Shoes**  
 Elinor Wylie

Let us walk in the white snow  
 In a soundless space;  
 With footsteps quiet and slow,  
 At a tranquil pace,  
 Under veils of white lace.

I shall go shod in silk,  
 And you in wool,  
 White as a white cow's milk,  
 More beautiful  
 Than the breast of a gull.

We shall walk through the still town  
 In a windless peace;  
 We shall step upon white down,  
 Upon silver fleece,  
 Upon softer than these.

We shall walk in velvet shoes:  
 Wherever we go  
 Silence will fall like dews  
 On white silence below.  
 We shall walk in the snow.

See **Figurative Language**,  
**Homeric Simile, Metaphor**.  
 See also pages 320, 654.

**SOLILOQUY** *A speech, usually lengthy, in which a character, alone on stage, expresses his or her thoughts aloud.* The soliloquy is a very useful dramatic device, as it allows the dramatist to convey a character's most intimate thoughts and feelings directly to the audience. In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, we are introduced to the Friar in Act Two through a soliloquy in which he reveals his knowledge of herbs, thus foreshadowing the plan of the sleeping potion later in the play. One of Shakespeare's masterful uses of soliloquy occurs in Act Four, Scene 3, in Juliet's speech before taking the potion. She reveals her innermost conflicts: first her fear of being poisoned by the Friar, then her terror of awaking in the tomb, and finally her desperate courage, braving death in order to be reunited with Romeo.

See **Aside, Conventions, Monologue**.  
 See also page 528.

**SONNET** *A fourteen-line lyric poem, usually written in rhymed iambic pentameter (in lines of ten syllables with a stress on every other syllable).* Sonnets vary in structure and rhyme scheme, but are generally of two types: the **Petrarchan**, or **Italian, sonnet** and the **Shakespearean**, or **English, sonnet**. Sonnets usually express a single theme or idea.

The Italian sonnet is a form that originated in Italy in the thirteenth century. The Italian sonnet has two parts, an **octave** (eight lines) and a **sestet** (six lines).



It is usually rhymed *abbaabba cdecde*. The two parts of the Italian sonnet play off each other in a variety of ways. Sometimes the octave raises a question which the sestet answers. Sometimes the sestet opposes what the octave says or extends it.

The Italian sonnet is often called the Petrarchan sonnet because the Italian poet Francesco Petrarch used it so extensively. Petrarch dedicated more than three hundred sonnets to a woman named Laura.

The Shakespearean sonnet, a form made famous by William Shakespeare, consists of three quatrains (four-line stanzas) and a concluding couplet (two rhyming lines), with the rhyme scheme *abab cdcd efef gg*.

The sonnet form lends itself to variations. Many modern poets have experimented with the sonnet form, combining features of the Petrarchan and Shakespearean modes or inventing new patterns.

Here the poet is working with a traditional subject — the intensity of feeling stirred by beautiful music. Note, however, how she has modified the traditional form of the sonnet.

#### Girl with 'Cello

May Sarton

- a There had been no such music here until  
b A girl came in from falling dark and snow  
b To bring into this house her glowing 'cello  
a As if some silent, magic animal.
- a She sat, head bent, her long hair all a-spill  
b Over the breathing wood, and drew the bow.  
a There had been no such music here until  
b A girl came in from falling dark and snow.
- a And she drew out that sound so like a wail,  
b A rich dark suffering joy, as if to show  
b All that a wrist holds and that fingers know  
a When they caress a magic animal.
- a There had been no such music here until  
b A girl came in from falling dark and snow.

The poet makes use of only two rhymes, including approximate rhyme (or partial rhyme); *until/animal*; *wail/animal*. The poet also repeats certain lines as refrains in each stanza. The first quatrain, which rhymes *abba*, is Petrarchan, but the second quatrain, which rhymes *abab*, is Shakespearean. The sestet departs from these traditional forms altogether: *abbaab*.

See pages 351, 353.

**SPEAKER** *The voice in a poem.* The speaker may be the poet or a character created by the poet. The speaker may also be a thing or an animal. For example, the "I" or speaker of Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem "Fable" is a squirrel arguing with a mountain:

And I think it no disgrace  
To occupy my place.  
If I'm not so large as you,  
You are not so small as I,  
And not half so spry.  
I'll not deny you make  
A very pretty squirrel track;  
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;  
If I cannot carry forests on my back,  
Neither can you crack a nut.

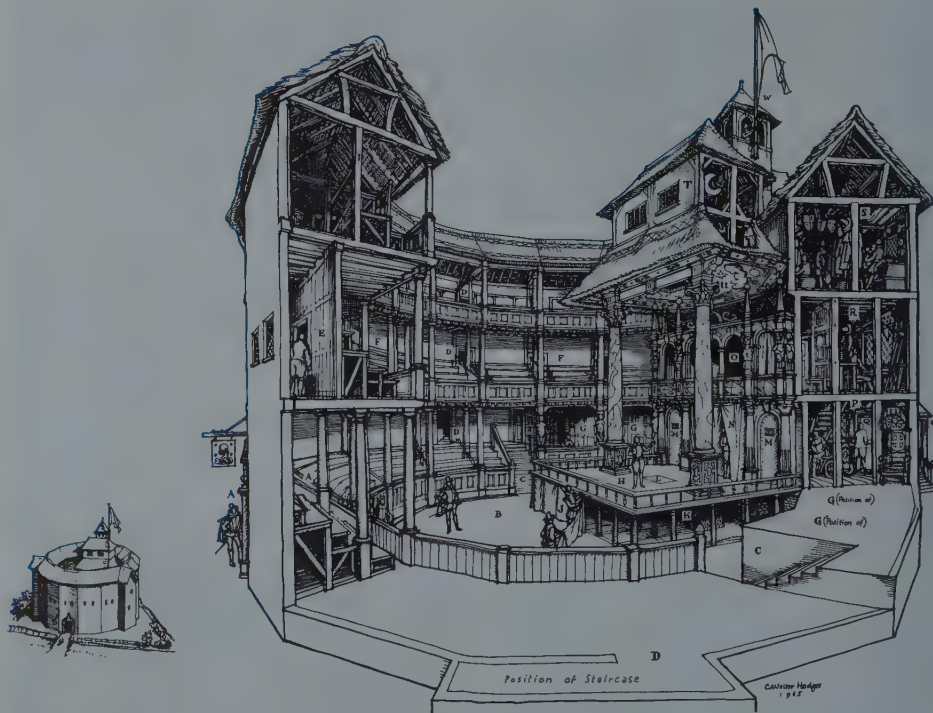
Identifying the speaker in a poem is a key to understanding the poem's meaning.

See page 298.

**STAGING (or STAGECRAFT)** *All the devices except dialogue which a dramatist uses to communicate to an audience.* Important elements of staging include **scenery, costume, gesture and movement, and lighting**. Use the diagram of The Globe Playhouse on page 880 to answer these questions about aspects of staging for *Romeo and Juliet*. Where might the famous balcony scene have taken place? What part of the stage could have been used for Friar Lawrence's cell or Juliet's tomb? Where would props or wardrobes have been stored? Find where the groundlings stood and the galleries for the wealthy spectators.

**STANZA** *A group of lines forming a unit in a poem.* Many stanzas have a fixed pattern—that is, the same number of lines and the same rhyme scheme. "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" by William Wordsworth has a regular pattern. Each of the four stanzas has six lines composed of a quatrain and a couplet, with the rhyme scheme *ababcc*. Some poems do not repeat the same pattern in each stanza, yet each group of lines is still referred to as a stanza. "The Fawn" by Edna St. Vincent Millay has five stanzas, but there is no regular pattern of line length or rhyme scheme.

A stanza may be as short as the **couplet**, two rhyming lines. A favorite form of many English poets has been the **heroic couplet**, two rhyming lines of iam-



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bic pentameter. The **tercet**, or **triplet**, is a stanza of three lines, often with one rhyme. The **quatrain** is a four-line stanza with many patterns of rhyme and rhythm. In ballads, the second and fourth lines are usually rhymed while the first and third lines are unrhymed.

Some stanza forms are named for the poets who devised them. The **Spenserian stanza**, for example, a complex nine-line stanza, with the rhyme scheme *ababbcbcc*, is named for the sixteenth-century English poet Edmund Spenser.

See page 350.

**STATIC CHARACTER** *A character who remains the same throughout a narrative.* Static characters do not

develop or change beyond the way in which they are first presented.

See **Characters**.  
See also page 74.

**SUBPLOT** *Secondary action that is interwoven with the main action in a play or story.* Several subplots are not uncommon in a novel. The effect of one or more subplots may be to provide some comic relief from a more serious main plot, or to create a certain atmosphere or mood, such as suspense or intrigue. *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens is an example of a novel with several subplots, all related to the main action of Pip's story. For instance, there is the story of Mr. Wemmick's life outside the office, a life that we find surprisingly full and warm. His story is

revealed to us through his devotion to his deaf father, the Aged Parent; through his relationship with Miss Skiffins; and through his concern for his small, private home.

See **Plot**.

See also page 666.

**SUSPENSE** *That quality of a literary work that makes the reader or audience uncertain or tense about the outcome of events.* Suspense makes readers ask, "What will happen next?" or "How will this work out?" and impels them to read on. Suspense is greatest when it focuses attention on a sympathetic character. Thus, the most familiar kind of suspense involves a character hanging from the ledge of a tall building, or tied to railroad tracks as a train approaches, or ascending a staircase to open a suspicious door. But suspense may also arise simply from curiosity, as when a character must make an important decision, or seek an explanation for something. One of the reasons for the popularity of "The Lady, or the Tiger?" is that the author does *not* relieve our suspense. When that story is over, we are still wondering, "What happened?"

Often a writer hints at what is to come. This method of building suspense is known as **foreshadowing**. Foreshadowing helps to establish interest early in a narrative and also prepares the reader for the outcome.

See **Foreshadowing, Plot**.

See also page 29.

**SYMBOL** *Any object, person, place, or action that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger than itself, such as a quality, an attitude, a belief, or a value.* A rose is often a symbol of love and beauty; a skull is often a symbol of death; spring and winter often symbolize youth and old age; a dove usually symbolizes peace. In "Uphill," Christina Rossetti uses the climb up a hill to symbolize life's journey.

In this poem a game of football is used to symbolize the cycle of life:

**In the beginning was the**  
*Lillian Morrison*

Kickoff.  
The ball flew  
spiralling true  
into the end zone  
where it was snagged,

neatly hugged  
by a swivel-hipped back  
who ran up the field  
and was smeared.

The game has begun.  
The game has been won.  
The game goes on.  
Long live the game.  
Gather and lock  
tackle and block  
move, move,  
around the arena  
and always the beautiful  
trajectories.

See pages 163, 331.

**THEME** *The main idea or the basic meaning of a literary work.* The theme of a work is not the same thing as its subject. In the following poem, for example, the subject is toy bears, but the underlying idea—the theme—is that as the playthings of childhood vanish, youthful innocence is lost forever.

#### **Bears**

*Adrienne Rich*

Wonderful bears that walked my room all night,  
Where are you gone, your sleek and fairy fur,  
Your eyes' veiled imperious light?

Brown bears as rich as mocha or as musk,  
White opalescent bears whose fur stood out  
Electric in the deepening dusk,

And great black bears who seemed more blue  
than black,  
More violet than blue against the dark—  
Where are you now? upon what track

Mutter your muffled paws, that used to tread  
So softly, surely, up the creakless stair  
While I lay listening in bed?

When did I lose you? whose have you become?  
Why do I wait and wait and never hear  
Your thick nocturnal pacing in my room?  
My bears, who keeps you now, in pride and fear?

Not all literary works can be said to express a theme. Theme generally is not a concern in those works that are told primarily for entertainment; it is of importance in those literary works that comment on or present some insight about the meaning of life.



In some literary works the theme is expressed directly, but more often, theme is *implicit*—that is, it must be dug out and thought about. A simple theme can often be stated in a single sentence. But sometimes a literary work is rich and complex, and a paragraph or even an essay is needed to state the theme.

See pages 178, 187, 197.

**TONE** *The attitude a writer takes toward his or her subject, characters, and readers.* Through tone, a writer can amuse, anger, or shock the reader. Tone is created through the choice of words and details. William Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* and Anton Chekhov in *A Marriage Proposal* deal with courtship and marriage, but from entirely different perspectives. Shakespeare treats his young lovers as tragic figures. They have nobility and dignity, and their declarations of love are among the most eloquent passages in the play. Chekhov's play presents a comic misalliance of two completely unromantic characters who seem constitutionally incompatible. Shakespeare's tone might be described as compassionate and tender; Chekhov's as wry and genially mocking.

**TRAGEDY** *In general, a literary work in which the central character meets an unhappy or disastrous end.* Unlike **comedy**, which often portrays a central character of weak nature, tragedy often depicts the

problems of a central character of dignified or heroic stature. Through a related series of events, this main character, the tragic hero or heroine, is brought to a final downfall. The causes of the character's downfall vary. In traditional dramas, the cause is often an error in judgment or a combination of inexplicable outside forces that overwhelm the character. In modern dramas, the causes range from moral or psychological weakness to the evils of society. The tragic hero or heroine, though defeated, usually gains a measure of wisdom or self-awareness. There may be more than one central character in a tragedy. William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, has a tragic hero and heroine.

See **Drama**.

See also page 404.

#### TURNING POINT

See **Crisis, Plot**.

See also page 555.

**VERSE DRAMA or VERSE PLAY** *A play written mostly or entirely in verse.* Verse plays are often written in **blank verse** (unrhymed iambic pentameter). William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is an example of verse drama.

See **Blank Verse**.

## GLOSSARY

The words listed in the glossary in the following pages are found in the selections in this textbook. You can use this glossary as you would a dictionary—to look up words that are unfamiliar to you. Strictly speaking, the word *glossary* means a collection of technical, obscure, or foreign words found in a certain field of work. Of course, the words in this glossary are not “technical, obscure, or foreign,” but are those that might present difficulty as you read the selections in this textbook.

Many words in the English language have several meanings. In this glossary, the meanings given are the ones that apply to the words as they are used in the selections in the textbook. Words closely related in form and meaning are generally listed together in one entry (**commend** and **commendable**), and the definition is given for the first form. Related words that appear as separate entries in dictionaries are listed separately (**allude** and **allusion**). Regular adverbs (ending in *-ly*) are defined in their adjective form, with the adverb form shown at the end of the definition.

The following abbreviations are used:

*adj.*, adjective      *n.*, noun      *v.*, verb  
*adv.*, adverb      *prep.*, preposition

For more information about the words in this glossary, consult a dictionary.

### A

**abash** (ə-bāsh') *v.* To make ashamed or ill at ease.  
**abate** (ə-bāt') *v.* To reduce in amount or intensity.  
**abhor** (āb-bōr') *v.* 1. To look at with horror. 2. To hate intensely.  
**abhorrence** (āb-hōr'əns) *n.* Hatred; disgust.  
**abhorrent** (āb-hōr'ənt) *adj.* Hateful; disgusting.  
**abiding** (ə-bī'ding) *adj.* Lasting.  
**ablution** (ā-blōō'shən) *n.* A washing of the body or part of it.  
**abominable** (ə-bōm'ə-nə-bəl) *adj.* Hateful; detestable.

**abscond** (āb-skōnd') *v.* To go away quickly and secretly.

**abstract** (āb-strākt', āb'strākt') *adj.* Having a geometric pattern or design that does not represent any particular figure.

**abstracted** (āb-strāk'tid) *adj.* Lost in thought.

**absurd** (āb-sûrd', -zûrd') *adj.* Ridiculous; laughable.

**abundant** (ə-bŭn'dənt) *adj.* Plentiful.

**abut** (ə-bŭt') *v.* To border on; be next to.

**abyssal** (ə-bīz'məl) *adj.* Extreme; bottomless.

**abyss** (ə-bīs') *n.* Any bottomless depth or empty space.

**accommodate** (ə-kōm'ə-dāt) *v.* To settle differences; reconcile.

**accomplice** (ə-kōm'plis) *n.* A partner in an undertaking, particularly of an illegal or secret nature.

**accost** (ə-kōst', ə-kōst') *v.* To approach and speak to in a bold way.

**accouterments** (ə-kōō'tər-mənts) *n. pl.* Special clothing or equipment.

**acquiesce** (āk'wē-ēs') *v.* To agree readily.

**acquisition** (āk'wə-zish'ən) *n.* Something obtained or acquired.

**acrid** (āk'rid) *adj.* Harsh or bitter to the taste or smell.

**adept** (ə-dēpt') *adj.* Skilled; proficient.—**adeptly** *adv.*

**adjoin** (ə-join') *v.* To be next to.

**adjunct** (āj'ŭngkt') *n.* Something connected to another thing in a helpful, but not necessary, way.

**adjure** (ə-jōōr') *v.* To command or appeal to solemnly.

**adobe** (ə-dō'bē) *n.* Sun-dried brick.

**adorn** (ə-dōrn') *v.* To decorate.

**adulation** (āj'ōō-lā'shən) *n.* Overflowing flattery or praise.

**advent** (ād'vēnt) *n.* Arrival.

**adversary** (ād'vər-sēr'ē) *n.* An opponent or enemy.

**adz** (ādz) *n.* An axlike tool.

**affable** (āf'ə-bəl) *adj.* Friendly; pleasant.

**affect** (ə-fēkt') *v.* To assume.

ā pat/ā pay/ār care/ā father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f five/g gag/h hat/hw which/ī pit/ī pie/īr pier/j judge/k kick/  
l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/  
sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edi-  
ble, gallop, circus/ā Fr. ami/œ Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ū Fr. tu, Ger. über/KH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.

**affirm** (ə-fûrm') *v.* To make a solemn and formal declaration to speak the truth without taking an oath.

**affluent** (ăf'loo-ənt) *adj.* Wealthy.—*n. pl.* Rich people.

**aghost** (ə-găst') *adj.* Terrified; shocked.

**agile** (ăj'əl, ăj'il) *adj.* Active; able to move easily and quickly.

**agility** (ə-jil'ə-tē) *n.* The ability to move quickly and easily.

**alacrity** (ə-lăk'rə-tē) *n.* Eagerness.

**alderman** (ôl'dər-mən) *n.* A member of the city government.

**alienation** (ăl-yə-nă'shən, ă'lē-ə-) *n.* Estrangement; isolation.

**allot** (ə-lôt') *v.* To assign, distribute.

**allude** (ə-lōod') *v.* To make a casual or indirect reference.

**allusion** (ə-lōo'zhən) *n.* An indirect but meaningful reference.

**altercation** (ôl'tər-kă'shən) *n.* A noisy quarrel.

**ambiguity** (ăm'bī-gyōō'ə-tē) *n.* 1. Something that has two or more meanings. 2. Mystery.

**ambivalent** (ăm-biv'ə-lənt) *adj.* Showing conflicting thoughts or emotions.

**amble** (ăm'bəl) *v.* To walk in a slow, relaxed way.

**amend** (ə-mënd') *v.* To change in order to correct.

**amends** (ə-mëndz') *n. pl.* Anything done or given to make up for an injury or loss.

**amenity** (ə-mēn'ə-tē, ə-mē'nə-tē) *n.* Something that makes life more comfortable or convenient.

**amicable** (ăm'ī-kə-bəl) *adj.* Friendly.

**amiss** (ə-mis') *adv.* In the wrong manner.

**amorous** (ăm'ər-əs) *adj.* 1. Loving. 2. In love.

**analogy** (ə-năl'ə-jē) *n.* 1. Some similarity between otherwise different things. 2. An explanation of one thing by comparing it to another thing.

**anguish** (ăng'gwish) *n.* Great mental or physical suffering.

**animate** (ăn'ə-mat') *v.* To make lively or energetic.

**animosity** (ăn'ə-môs'ə-tē) *n.* Extreme hatred.

**annals** (ăn'əlz) *n.* A record of events year by year.

**antagonistic** (ăn-tăg'ə-nis'tik) *adj.* Opposing; hostile.

**anticipate** (ăn-tis'ə-păt') *v.* To use in advance, as an allowance of money or a legacy.

**antimony** (ăn'tə-mō'nē) *n.* A metallic chemical element used in combination with other metals in order to harden them.

**antiquated** (ăn'tə-kwă'tid) *adj.* Very old; out-of-date.

**aperture** (ăp'ər-choor, -chər) *n.* An opening.

**apothecary** (ə-pôth'ə-kēr'ē) *n.* A person who prepares and sells drugs.

**appall** (ə-pól') *v.* To horrify; shock.

**apparition** (ăp'ə-rish'ən) *n.* 1. A ghost. 2. A strange sight. 3. A sudden appearance.

**appease** (ə-pēz') *v.* To satisfy; relieve.

**appellation** (ăp'ə-lă'shən) *n.* A name.

**appertain** (ăp'ər-tăn') *v.* To relate to; belong to.

**apportion** (ə-pôr'shən, ə-pôr'-) *v.* To assign; divide.

**appraise** (ə-prāz') *v.* To evaluate; judge.

**apprehend** (ăp'rī-hënd') *v.* 1. To capture. 2. To understand.

**apprehension** (ăp'rī-hēn'shən) *n.* Anxiety; fear.

**apprehensive** (ăp'rī-hēn'siv) *adj.* Fearful.

**apprise** (ə-prīz') *v.* To notify.

**appropriate** (ə-prô'prē-ăt') *v.* To take possession of something, frequently without permission.

**aptitude** (ăp'tə-tōod', -tyōod) *n.* A natural ability or tendency.

**ardor** (ăr'dər) *n.* Great passion; emotional warmth.

**armada** (ăr-mă'də, -mă'də) *n.* A fleet.

**array** (ə-ră') *n.* 1. An orderly display. 2. Fine clothes and accessories.

**arrogant** (ăr'ə-gənt) *adj.* Excessively self-important and proud.

**artisan** (ăr'tə-zən, -sən) *n.* Someone with an occupation or craft that requires special skill.

**ascend** (ə-sēnd') *v.* Rise.

**ascertain** (ăs'ər-tăn') *v.* To make sure through examination.

**aspire** (ə-spīr') *v.* To have a grand ambition.

**assail** (ə-săl') *v.* To attack violently.

**assent** (ə-sēnt') *n.* Agreement.

**assert** (ə-sûrt') *v.* To declare; express.

**assertion** (ə-sûr'shən) *n.* A declaration without proof.

**assiduous** (ə-sij'ōō-əs) *adj.* Carefully attentive.

**assumption** (ə-sump'shən) *n.* Something taken for granted without proof.

**astound** (ə-stound') *v.* To amaze.

**asunder** (ə-sûn'dər) *adv.* Apart.

**athwart** (ə-thwôrt') *prep.* Across.

**attain** (ə-tăn') *v.* To arrive at through effort.

**audacious** (ô-dă'shəs) *adj.* Fearless; rudely bold.

**audacity** (ô-dăs'ə-tē) *n.* Boldness; daring.

**aura** (ôr'ə) *n.* Distinctive or special quality.

**auspicious** (ô-spish'əs) *adj.* Lucky; predicting a good future.



**austere** (ô-stîr') *adj.* Simple; plain.  
**automaton** (ô-tôm'ə-tən, -tôn') *n.* A person or thing acting in a mechanical way.  
**aversion** (ə-vûr'zhən) *n.* An extreme dislike.  
**avowal** (ə-vou'əl) *n.* An open declaration.  
**awful** (ô'fəl) *adj.* Inspiring a feeling of reverence and wonder.  
**azure** (ăzh'ər) *adj.* Sky-blue.

## B

**babouche** (bə-bûsh') *n.* A flat, backless slipper worn in North Africa.  
**baffle** (băf'əl) *v.* To puzzle.  
**baleful** (băl'fəl) *adj.* Threatening; evil.  
**bandy** (băn'dē) *v.* To converse casually.  
**banish** (băn'ish) *v.* To exile.—**banishment** *n.*  
**bankrupt** (băngk'rŭpt', -rəpt) *adj.* Having no money; destitute.—*To go bankrupt.*  
**barbaric** (băr-băr'ik) *adj.* Wild; uncivilized.  
**barbarous** (băr'bər-əs) *adj.* Uncivilized; cruel.  
**barricade** (băr'ə-kād', băr'ə-kād') *n.* A structure set up to block a passageway, usually for protection.  
**battlement** (băt'l-mənt) *n.* A wall with open spaces to shoot through, usually on top of a tower.  
**bedeck** (bī-dēk') *v.* To adorn.  
**beguile** (bī-gil') *v.* 1. To deceive; trick. 2. To spend time pleasantly.  
**behest** (bī-hēst') *n.* An order.  
**belated** (bī-lă'tid) *adj.* Late.—**belatedly** *adv.*  
**bellow** (bēl'ō) *v.* To roar.  
**bemuse** (bī-myōōz') *v.* To stupefy.  
**benefactor** (bēn'ə-făk'tər) *n.* Someone who helps another person, especially financially.  
**benign** (bī-nīn') *adj.* Favorable.  
**berate** (bī-răt') *v.* To scold harshly.  
**bereave** (bī-rēv') *v.* To leave sad or forlorn, as by death.—**bereaved** *adj.*  
**beseech** (bī-sēch') *v.* To ask seriously.  
**bestow** (bī-stō') *v.* To give; grant.  
**bevy** (bēv'ē) *n.* A group.  
**bier** (bīr) *n.* A structure upon which a corpse, or a coffin, is placed.  
**bilge** (bīlj) *n.* The water around the lower part of a ship.  
**billow** (bīl'ō) *v.* To swell or rise.  
**bizarre** (bī-zăr') *adj.* Odd; queer.

**blanch** (blănch, blānch) *v.* To become pale or white.  
**bland** (blănd) *adj.* Mild; pleasant.—**blandly** *adv.*  
**blight** (blit) *n.* A plant disease.  
**blotch** (blōtch) *n.* A spot or mark differing in color from the surrounding area.  
**blunt** (blünt) *adj.* Abrupt; insensitive.  
**bluster** (blūs'tər) *v.* To express oneself in a boastful or bullying way.  
**boggy** (bô'gē, bog'ē) *adj.* Swampy.  
**boisterous** (boi'stər-əs, -strəs) *adj.* Stormy; violent.  
**bole** (bōl) *n.* The trunk of a tree.  
**borough** (bŭr'ō, bŭr'ə) *n.* 1. A self-governing town. 2. A unit of larger city.  
**boutique** (bōō-tēk') *n.* A small shop.  
**brace** (brās) *n.* A rope used to swing or secure the sails of a ship.  
**brandish** (brăn'dish) *v.* To wave or flourish in a menacing way.  
**bravado** (bră-vă'dō) *n.* 1. A show of false courage. 2. Defiant behavior.  
**brazen** (bră'zən) *adj.* 1. Made of or resembling brass in color and hardness. 2. Shameless; bold.  
**breach** (brēch) *n.* An opening or gap in a wall.  
**bristle** (brīs'əl) *v.* To rise and stand erect as a result of anger or fear.  
**broach** (brōch) *v.* To bring up a topic for discussion.  
**brusque** (brŭsk) *adj.* Abrupt in behavior or speech; discourteous.—**brusquely** *adv.*  
**buckler** (bŭk-lər) *n.* A small round shield held or worn on the arm.  
**buffet** (bŭf'it) *n.* A punch with the fist.  
**bulldoze** bŭōl'dōz') *v.* Slang To bully.  
**burgeon** (bŭr'jən) *v.* To grow rapidly; flourish.  
**burnish** (bŭr'nish) *v.* To polish; make smooth and shiny.  
**butt** (bŭt) *n.* The thicker and larger end of an object.

## C

**cadence** (kād'ns) *n.* Beat; rhythm.  
**cadent** (kād'ənt) *adj.* Moving in a rhythmic, measured way.  
**cajole** (kə-jōl') *v.* To coax.  
**calamity** (kə-lăm'ə-tē) *n.* A disaster; misfortune.  
**candelabra** (kăn'də-lă'brə, -lă'brə, lă'brə) *n.* A large, branched candleholder.

ă pau/ă pay/ăr care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pei/ē be/f fife/g gag/h hau/hw which/i pīt/i pie/īr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ă Fr. ami/ăc Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ŭ Fr. tu, Ger. über/kh Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.

**canopy** (kăn'ə-pē) *n.* A rooflike covering held or fastened above a person or thing for protection or decoration.

**capitalize** (kăp'ə-təl-iz') *v.* To profit by.

**caprice** (kə-prēs') *n.* A sudden, impulsive change of mind or way of thinking.

**capricious** (kə-prish'əs, -prē'shəs) *adj.* Tending to change one's mind suddenly; flighty.

**carbine** (kăr'bīn', -bēn') *n.* A light shoulder rifle of limited range.

**careen** (kə-rēn') *v.* To move from side to side in an uncontrolled manner.

**carriage** (kăr'ij) *n.* The manner of bearing the body; posture.

**cascade** (käs-kād') *n.* A waterfall.

**catacombs** (kăt'ə-kōmz') *n.* A series of grave sites in an underground burial place.

**cataplexy** (kăt'l-ēp'sē) *n.* A condition in which there is a sudden and temporary loss of consciousness and rigidity of the body.—**cataplectic** *adj.*

**catapult** (kăt'ə-pūlt') *n.* Slingshot.—*v.* To leap or spring up suddenly.

**causeway** (kôz'wā') *n.* A raised road across water or swampland.

**cavalier** (kāv'ə-līr') *n.* A courteous, well-dressed gentleman.

**cessation** (sē-sā'shən) *n.* A stopping, either permanent or temporary.

**chafe** (chăf) *v.* To make sore; irritate.

**char** (chăr) *v.* To scorch.

**chide** (chid) *v.* To scold in a mild way.

**chipyard** (chīp'yărd') *n.* A place where wood is cut for fuel.

**chivalry** (shīv'əl-rē) *n.* The noble qualities of courage and honor associated with medieval knights.

**chorister** (kôr'is-tər. kôr'-, kôr'-) *n.* A choir singer.

**chronic** (krôn'ik) *adj.* Continuing; recurrent.

**chronicle** (krôn'ī-kəl) *n.* A record of events in the order in which they happened.

**chronological** (krôn'ə-lōj'ī-kəl, krō'nə-) *adj.* Arranged in the order that the events took place.

**churn** (chûrn) *v.* To shake or stir forcefully.

**ciphering** (sī'fər-īng) *n.* Arithmetic.

**circumscribe** (sûr'kəm-skrib') *v.* To encircle.

**civility** (sə-vīl'ə-tē) *n.* Politeness.

**clamor** (klăm'ər) *v.* To demand or complain noisily; to make a loud, continuous noise.—*n.* noise.—**clamorer** *n.*

**cleave** (klēv) *v.* To stick to; cling.

**cleft** (klēft) *n.* A gap; opening.—*adj.* split.

**clemency** (klēm'ən-sē) *n.* Mercy.

**cogent** (kō'jənt) *adj.* Forceful.

**cognomen** (kög-nō'mən) *n.* A name; nickname.

**coherent** (kō-hīr'ənt, kō-hēr'-) *adj.* Logical; consistent in thought.

**cohort** (kō'hōrt') *n.* A companion; associate.

**collision** (kə-līzh'ən) *n.* A violent coming together; forceful clash.

**combatant** (kəm-băt'ənt, kôm'bə-tənt) *n.* Someone taking part in an armed conflict; fighter.

**comber** (kō'mər) *n.* A large ocean wave.

**commence** (kə-mēns') *v.* To begin.

**commend** (kə-mēnd') *v.* To give regards, or good wishes, to someone.—**commendable** *adj.*

**commiserate** (kə-mīz'ə-rāt') *v.* To sympathize with.

**communal** (kə-myōon'əl, kôm'yə-nəl) *adj.* Belonging to the community; shared.

**communism** (kə-myōon'yən) *n.* Sharing of thoughts or feelings.

**compass** (kūm'pəs, kôm') *v.* To understand.

**compassion** (kəm-ṽash'ən) *n.* Pity.

**compassionate** (kēm-pāsh'ən-īt) *adj.* Sympathetic.

**compensation** (kôm'pən-sā'shən) *n.* Something of equal worth given to make up for a loss or damage.

**compilation** (kôm'pə-lā'shən) *n.* The act of gathering and putting together literary works, statistics, etc.

**comply** (kəm-plī') *v.* To behave in accordance with some request or rule.

**compose** (kəm-pōz') *v.* To calm or quiet oneself.

**composure** (kəm-pō'zhər) *n.* Calmness.

**compound** (kôm'pound) *n.* An enclosed area or group of buildings where people live.

**comprise** (kəm-prīz') *v.* To consist of.

**compromise** (kôm'prə-mīz') *n.* A settlement.—*v.*

1. To place one's reputation and character in danger.
2. To settle by having each side give up some demands.

**compulsory** (kəm-pūl'sə-rē) *adj.* Required.

**conceive** (kən-sēv') *v.* To think up.

**concentration** (kôn'sən-trā'shən) *n.* 1. Extreme thoughtfulness. 2. Focused attention.

**conception** (kən'sēp'shən) *n.* A mental picture; idea.

**concession** (kěn-sēsh'ən) *n.* Something yielded or granted.

**conciliatory** (kən-sīl'ē-ə-tôr'ē. -tôr'ē) *adj.* Soothing; friendly.

**condescend** (kôn'dī-sēnd') *v.* To come down to the level of someone regarded as inferior.

**condone** (kən-dōn') *v.* To excuse; overlook.

**confectioner** (kən'-fĕk'shən-ər) *n.* A person who makes or sells sweet foods.

**confer** (kən-fŭr') *v.* To give; grant.

**configuration** (kən-fig'yə-rā'shən) *n.* The form or shape of.

**confound** (kən-found', kŏn-) *v.* To mix up; confuse.

**confront** (kən-frŭnt') *v.* To come face to face with.

**congregate** (kŏng'grə-gāt) *v.* To gather in a crowd.

**conical** (kŏn'ī-kəl) *adj.* In the shape of a cone.

**conjecture** (kən-jĕk'chər) *n.* A conclusion based on insufficient evidence.

**conjure** (kŏn'jər, kən-jōōr') *v.* To appeal to earnestly.—**conjure up** **1.** To bring to mind. **2.** To cause something to happen as by magic.

**connoisseurship** (kŏn'ə-sŭr'shīp') *n.* Expert knowledge in some particular field, often in matters of art or fine foods.

**consequence** (kŏn'sə-kwĕns) *n.* Effect; result.

**conspicuous** (kən-spĭk'yōō-əs) *adj.* Attracting attention.

**conspire** (kən-spīr') *v.* **1.** To act together secretly, usually to commit a crime. **2.** To plot or plan something.

**constable** (kŏn'stə-bəl, kŭn'-) *n.* A peace officer in a village or a town.

**consternation** (kŏn'stər-nā'shən) *n.* Amazement; bewilderment.

**constraint** (kən-strānt') *n.* Emotional repression.

**contemplate** (kŏn'təm-plăt') *v.* To think about carefully; look at intently.

**contemptible** (kən-tĕmp'tə-bəl) *adj.* Deserving of scorn; worthless.

**contemptuous** (kən-tĕmp'chōō-əs) *adj.* Scornful.—**contemptuously** *adv.*

**contend** (kən-tĕnd) *v.* To struggle against in combat or competition.

**contentious** (kən-tĕn'shəs) *adj.* Quarrelsome; ready to argue.

**contingent** (kən-tĭn'jĕnt) *adj.* Dependent upon something that has not yet happened.

**contraption** (kən-trăp'shən) *n.* A device; gadget.

**contrite** (kən-trīt', kŏn'trīt') *adj.* Feeling very guilty for having done something wrong.—**contritely** *adv.*

**contrive** (kən-trīv') *v.* To plan cleverly; scheme.

**convention** (kən-vĕn'shən) *n.* A thing, behavior, or procedure established by custom and widely used throughout society.

**convert** (kən-vŭrt') *v.* To change into another form or thing.

**copious** (kŏ'pĕ-əs) *adj.* Plentiful.

**cordial** (kŏr'jəl) *adj.* Friendly; hearty.

**cordwood** (kŏrd'wood') *n.* Wood cut in short lengths to be used for fuel.

**corroborate** (kə-rŏb'ə-rāt') *v.* To confirm.

**corrode** (kə-rŏd') *v.* To wear away gradually.

**corrupt** (kə-rŭpt') *v.* To cause to become morally unsound.

**cosmopolite** (kŏz-mŏp'ə-līt') *n.* A person at home anywhere in the world.

**council** (koun'səl) *n.* A serious discussion among a group of people.

**counsel** (koun'səl) *n.* **1.** Advice. **2.** Legal representation in court. **3.** Ideas; opinions. **4.** Private, unexpressed thoughts.—*v.* To advise.

**countenance** (koun'tə-nāns) *n.* **1.** The face. **2.** The look on a person's face.

**counterpart** (koun'tər-pärt') *n.* A person or thing that closely resembles another.

**countinghouse** (coun'tĭng-hous') *n.* A place in which a business carries out its clerical and financial functions.

**course** (kŏrs, kŏrs, kŏōrs) *v.* To move swiftly.

**courtier** (kŏr'tē-ər, kŏr'-, -tyər) *n.* **1.** A person who serves at a royal court. **2.** A person who seeks favor through flattery.

**couscous** (kōōs'kōōs) *n.* A North African food made of steamed, crushed grain.

**cove** (kŏv) *n.* A small inlet or bay.

**covet** (kŭv'īt) *v.* To have strong desire for something.

**cower** (kou'ər) *v.* To shrink away or hide oneself in fear.

**coy** (koi) *adj.* Affectedly cute or playful.

**cranny** (krăn'ĕ) *n.* An opening or crack.

**craven** (kră'vən) *adj.* Very fearful; cowardly.

**credulity** (krĭ-dŏō'lə-tĕ, -dyōō'lə-tĕ) *n.* A tendency to believe something too quickly.

**credulous** (krĕj'ŏō-ləs) *adj.* Too easily convinced.

**crescendo** (krə-shĕn'-dŏ) *n.* An increase in volume or intensity.

ă pat/ă pay/ăr care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ĕ pet/ĕ be/f fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/ĭ pit/ĭ pie/ĭr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ŏ pot/ŏ toe/ŏ paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ŏŏ took/ŏŏ boot/p pop/t roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ŭ cut/ŭr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ă Fr. ami/œ Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ŭ Fr. tu, Ger. über/kH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.



**crest** (krĕst) *n.* A cluster of feathers or an emblem decorating the top of a helmet.  
**crux** (krŭks) *n.* Cross.  
**crypt** (kript) *n.* An underground chamber used as a burial place.  
**cryptic** (krip'tik) *adj.* Having an unclear meaning; mysterious.  
**cubicle** (kyoo'bĭ-kəl) *n.* A small enclosed space or room.  
**cull** (kŭl) *v.* To select; gather.  
**culminate** (kŭl'mə-nāt') *v.* To come to the highest degree or effect.  
**cunning** (kŭn'ing) *adj.* Clever.—**cunningly** *adv.*  
**curfew** (kŭr'fyoo) *n.* 1. A specified time when inhabitants of a town are required to be off the streets. 2. A bell or other signal announcing this time.  
**currant** (kŭr'ənt) *n.* A seedless raisin.  
**cutter** (kŭt'ər) *n.* A small boat that moves quickly.  
**cynical** (sin'ĭ-kəl) *adj.* Of the belief that there is no true goodness in anyone; scornful.

## D

**damask** (dām'əsk) *n.* A heavy fabric with a woven-in-pattern used for table linen and furniture covers.  
**dandy** (dān'dē) *n.* An elegant dresser.  
**dank** (dāngk) *adj.* Miserably damp and chilly.  
**daub** (dób) *v.* To smear or cover with paint, mud, or plaster.  
**deal** (dēl) *n.* Pine wood.  
**debacle** (dĭ-bā'kəl, -bāk'əl) *n.* A sudden collapse or break-up.  
**debauch** (dĭ-bôch') *n.* An orgy.  
**débris** (dā'brē') *n.* Fragments.  
**decāl** (dĭ'kāl') *n.* A picture or design transferred onto wood, material, etc., from specially prepared paper.  
**decanter** (dĭ-kān'tər) *n.* An ornamental glass bottle used for serving liquids.  
**deceptive** (dĭ-sĕp'tiv) *adj.* Deceiving.  
**declaim** (dĭ-klām') *v.* To speak loudly; recite dramatically.  
**declamation** (dĕk'lə-mā'shən) *n.* A speech delivered in a dramatic manner.  
**decline** (dĭ-klĭn') *v.* To refuse.  
**decorous** (dĕk'ər-əs, dĭ-kór'əs) *adj.* Proper; in good taste.  
**decrepit** (dĭ-krĕp'it) *adj.* Worn out; broken down.  
**deface** (dĭ-fās') *v.* To disfigure.

**defamation** (dĕf'ə-mā'shən) *n.* The damaging of someone's reputation or character.  
**deflect** (dĭ-flĕkt') *v.* to bend; cause to go off to one side.  
**deft** (dĕft) *adj.* Skillful in a quick and sure way.  
**—deftly** *adv.*  
**degenerate** (dĭ-jĕn'ə-rāt') *v.* To lower in quality or value; worsen.  
**dejected** (dĭ-jĕk'tid) *adj.* Depressed.  
**delectable** (dĭ-lĕk'tə-bəl) *adj.* Delightful; enjoyable.  
**deliberation** (dĭ'lib'ə-rā'shən) *n.* Careful and lengthy consideration.  
**delirious** (dĭ-lĭr'ē-əs) *adj.* In a state of wild excitement.—**deliriously** *adv.*  
**deliverance** (dĭ-liv'ər-əns) *n.* The state or act of being freed.  
**demeanor** (dĭ-mĕ-nər) *n.* Behavior; conduct.  
**demented** (dĭ-mĕn'tid) *adj.* Insane.  
**dependent** (dĭ-pĕn'dənt) *adj.* Hanging down.  
**deplorable** (dĭp-plŏr'ə-bəl, dĭ-plŏr'ə-) *adj.* Regrettable.  
**depreciate** (dĭ-prĕ'shĕ-āt') *v.* To belittle; make seem less valuable.  
**depreciation** (dĭ-prĕ'shĕ-ā'shən) *n.* Belittlement.  
**depression** (dĭ-prĕsh'ən) *n.* A hollow.  
**deprive** (dĭ-prĭv') *v.* To deny someone the enjoyment or use of something.  
**deride** (dĭ-rĭd') *v.* To make fun of.  
**derision** (dĭ-rĭzh'ən) *n.* Ridicule.  
**derisive** (dĭ-rĭ'siv) *adj.* Mocking.  
**desolate** (dĕs'ə-lĭt) *adj.* Deserted; forlorn; lonely.  
**—desolately** *adv.*  
**desolation** (dĕs'ə-lā'shən) *n.* Misery; loneliness.  
**despond** (dĭ-spŏnd') *v.* To become discouraged.  
**detestable** (dĭ-tĕs'tə-bəl) *adj.* Hateful.  
**detractor** (dĭ-trāk'tər) *n.* One who belittles or speaks ill of another.  
**devastate** (dĕv'ə-stāt) *v.* To destroy; overwhelm.  
**devise** (dĭ-vĭz') *v.* To plan or create something.  
**devious** (dĕ'vē-əs) *adj.* Roundabout; not straightforward.  
**devoid** (dĭ-void') *adj.* Without.  
**devolve** (dĭ-vŏlv') *v.* To be passed on to another person, as a responsibility.  
**dexterity** (dĕk-stĕr'ə-tē) *n.* Skill; cleverness.  
**dexterous** (dĕk'strəs) *adj.* Skillful.  
**diabolical** (dĭ'ə-bŏl'ĭ-kəl) *adj.* devilish.  
**diadem** (dĭ'ə-dĕm') *n.* Crown.  
**diffidence** (dĭf'ə-dĕns) *n.* Shyness.  
**diffuse** (dĭ-fyooz') *v.* To spread out in all directions.

**dilapidated** (dī-lăp'-ə-dă'tid) *adj.* In a state of disrepair.

**diplomacy** (dī-plō'mə-sē) *n.* The skillful handling of relationships among nations.

**dipsomaniac** (dīp'sə-mă'nē-ăc) *n.* A person who craves alcoholic beverages.

**dire** (dir) *adj.* Dreadful.

**direful** (dir'fəl) *adj.* Frightful.

**dirge** (dîrj) *n.* A funeral hymn.

**disaffection** (dis'ə-fĕk'shən) *n.* The loss of affection or loyalty.

**disapprobation** (dis-ăp'rə-bă'shən) *n.* Disapproval.

**disband** (dis-bănd') *v.* To break up, as a group.

**discern** (dî-sûrn', -zûrn') *v.* To see clearly.

**discernible** (dî-sûr'nə-bəl) *adj.* Distinguishable.

**discomfit** (dis-kûm'fit) *v.* To make uneasy; embarrass.

**discomfiture** (dis-kum'fi-chōōr') *n.* Embarrassment; uneasiness.

**discompose** (dis'kəm-pō'zhər) *n.* The lack of calmness.

**disconsolate** (dis-kön'sə-lit) *adj.* Unable to be comforted; dejected.—**disconsolately** *adv.*

**discord** (dis'kôrd') *n.* 1. A conflict or disagreement. 2. A combination of harsh tones sounded together.

**discordant** (dis-kôr'dənt) *adj.* 1. Harsh in sound. 2. Not in agreement; conflicting.

**discourse** (dis'kôrs', -kôrs') *n.* A long speech or written piece about a particular subject.

**discreet** (dis-krēt') *adj.* Careful.—**discreetly** *adv.*

**discretion** (dis-krĕsh'ən) *n.* Caution.

**disdain** (dis-dān') *v.* 1. To reject scornfully. 2. To have an attitude of contempt toward something or someone.

**disdainful** (dis-dān'fəl) *adj.* Scornful.

**disintegrate** (dis-in'tə-grăt') *v.* To decay.

**disinterested** (dis-in'tri-stid, -in'tə-rĕs'tid) *adj.* Having no selfish interest or motive.—**disinterestedness** *n.*

**dislocate** (dis'lō-kăt', dis-lō'kăt') *n.* To displace a limb or organ from its normal place in the body.—**dislocation** *n.*

**dismay** (dis-mā') *n.* Discouragement; alarm.

**dismember** (dis'mĕm'bər) *v.* To remove the limbs from the body.

**disparage** (dis-păr'tij) *v.* To belittle.

**disparity** (dis-păr'ə-tē) *n.* Inequality or difference in rank, quality, or age.

**dispassionate** (dis-păsh'ə-nīt) *adj.* Not emotional; objective.

**disperse** (dis-pûrs') *v.* To scatter in various directions.

**dispirited** (dis-pîr'it-id) *adj.* Sad.

**dispose** (dis-pōz') *v.* To arrange or settle some important business.

**disposition** (dis'pə-zîsh'ən) *n.* 1. A settlement. 2. A person's temperament. 3. Inclination.

**dissemble** (dis-sĕm'bəl) *v.* To hide behind a disguise.

**dissolution** (dis'ə-lōō'shən) *n.* 1. Disintegration. 2. Death.

**dissonance** (dis'ə-nəns) *n.* In music, a combination of sounds that create tension or discord.

**distill** (dis-tîl') *v.* 1. To purify or refine. 2. To increase the strength of a substance.

**distort** (dis-tôrt') *v.* To twist out of proper shape.

**distracted** (dis-trăk'tid) *adj.* 1. Having one's attention diverted. 2. Confused or bewildered.

**distraction** (dis-trăk'shən) *n.* Mental disturbance.

**distraught** (dis-trôt') *adj.* Troubled; anxious.

**divan** (dî-văn', dî'văn') *n.* A long, low couch.

**divert** (dî-vûrt', dî-) *v.* To entertain.

**divine** (dî-vîn') *v.* To guess.

**docket** (dōk'it) *v.* To label or identify.

**doddering** (dōd'ər-ing) *adj.* Feeble from age; senile.

**dogged** (dō'gid), dōg'id) *adj.* Stubborn; persistent.—**doggedly** *adv.*—**doggedness** *n.*

**dolt** (dolt) *n.* A stupid person.

**domestic** (də-mĕs'tik) *adj.* Having to do with the family or house.

**dote** (dôt) *v.* To be extremely fond of.

**dowry** (dour'ē) *n.* The money or property a woman brings to her husband at marriage.

**drawn** (drôn) *adj.* Tense.

**droll** (dröl) *adj.* Comical in a strange way.

**drudge** (drūj) *n.* Someone who does hard, tedious work.

**dubious** (dōō'bĕ-əs, dyōō'-) *adj.* Vague; doubtful.—**dubiously** *adv.*

**duct** (dūkt) *n.* A tubular structure in the body through which a substance passes.—**ductal** *adj.*

**dullard** (dül'örd) *n.* A stupid person.

ă pat/ă pay/r care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ĕ pet/ĕ be/f fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/i pit/i pie/r pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ă about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ă Fr. ami/ă Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ă Fr. tu, Ger. über/KH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.

**duly** (doo'lē, dyoo'-) *adv.* Rightfully.  
**dumbwaiter** (dūm'wā'tər) *n.* A portable serving table.  
**dune** (dōon, dyoon) *n.* A small hill of windblown sand.  
**duplication** (doo'plī-kā'shən, dyoo'-) *n.* An exact copy of something.  
**duress** (doo-rēs', dyoo-, doōr'is, dyoor'-) *n.* The threat of the use of force.  
**dynamic** (dī-nām'ik) *adj.* Energetic; forceful.

## E

**ebb** (ēb) *n.* A fading away.—*v.* To lessen.  
**eccentric** (ēk-sen'trik, ik-) *adj.* Unusual in behavior.  
**ecology** (ī-kōl'ə-jē) *n.* A biological science dealing with the relationship between living organisms and their environment.  
**ecstasy** (ēk'stā-sē) *n.* Intense delight.  
**ecstatic** (ēk-stāt'ik) *adj.* In a state of intense delight.  
**eddy** (ēd'ē) *v.* A current of air or water moving in a circular motion.  
**edifice** (ēd'ə-fis) *n.* A building.  
**edify** (ēd'ə-fi) *v.* To teach; enlighten.  
**efficacious** (ēf'ə-kā'shəs) *adj.* Having the ability to accomplish a desired effect or result.  
**ejaculate** (ī-jāk'yā-lāte') *v.* To exclaim suddenly.  
**elate** (ī-lāt') *v.* To make very happy or proud.  
**elation** (ī-lā'shən) *n.* A feeling of great joy.  
**electrum** (ī-lēk'trəm) *n.* A light-yellow metal made from combining gold and silver.  
**elixir** (ī-līk'sər) *n.* A substance that is supposed to extend life indefinitely.  
**elliptical** (ī-līp'ī-kəl) *adj.* Not a perfect circle.  
**elude** (ī-loōd') *v.* To avoid being caught; escape understanding.  
**elusive** (ī-loō'siv) *adj.* Hard to retain or understand.  
**emanate** (ēm'ə-nāt') *v.* To come from; flow forth.  
**embalm** (ēm-bām', īm-) *v.* To preserve.  
**embellish** (ēm'bēl'ish, īm-) *v.* To improve by adding detail to.  
**embellishment** (ēm-bēl'ish-mənt) *n.* Ornamentation.  
**embezzle** (ēm-bēz'əl) *v.* To steal money that has been put in one's care.—**embezzlement** *n.*  
**emblazon** (ēm-blā'-zən, īm-) *v.* To decorate brightly.  
**embodiment** (ēm-bōd'ī-mənt, īm-) *n.* The bodily or visible form of something.

**emboss** (ēm-bōs', -bōs', īm-) *v.* To decorate with raised designs or patterns.  
**emulation** (ēm'yā-lā'shən) *n.* The imitation of another with the idea of equaling or going beyond.  
**encamp** (ēn-kāmp', īn-) *v.* To share living accommodations temporarily.  
**encompass** (ēn-kūm'pəs, īn-) *v.* To include; enclose.  
**encrust** (ēn-krüst', īn-) *v.* To cover with elaborate decoration.—**encrustation** *n.*  
**endeavor** (ēn-dēv'ər, īn-) *n.* An earnest effort.  
**endow** (ēn-dou', īn-) *v.* To give money or property.  
**endurance** (ēn-dōōr'əns, -dyōōr'əns, īn-) *n.* The capacity to bear up under hardship or prolonged stress.  
**endure** (ēn'dōōr', -dyōōr', īn-) *v.* 1. To last. 2. To tolerate.  
**enervating** (ēn'-ər-vāt'ing) *adj.* Depriving of strength; weakening.  
**enjoin** (ēn-join', īn-) *v.* To order someone to do something; urge.  
**enmity** (ēn-mā-tē) *n.* Hostility.  
**ennui** (ān'wē) *n.* Boredom.  
**ensue** (ēn-sōō', īn-) *v.* To follow immediately.  
**entrails** (ēn'trālz', -trəlz) *n. pl.* The internal organs of humans or animals.  
**entrance** (entrāns', -īn-) *v.* To fill with delight; enchant.  
**environ** (ēn-vī'rən, īn-) *v.* To surround.  
**enzymes** (ēn'zīmz) *n. pl.* Substances in plant and animal cells that help bring about certain chemical processes.  
**ephemeral** (ī-fēm'-ər-əl) *adj.* Lasting only a short time.  
**epistle** (ī-pīs'əl) *n.* A letter; message.  
**epithet** (ēp'ə-thēt') *n.* A word or phrase used to describe someone, often insulting.  
**equity** (ēk'wə-tē) *n.* Fairness; justice.  
**erode** (ī-rōd') *v.* To wear away.  
**errant** (ēr-ənt) *adj.* Wandering.  
**erratic** (ī-rāt'ik) *adj.* 1. Wandering. 2. Irregular.  
**erudition** (ēr'yōō-dish'ən, ēr'ōō-) *n.* Extensive knowledge obtained through reading and study.  
**eruption** (ī-rūp'shən) *n.* A sudden bursting out.  
**essence** (ēs-əns) *n.* A solution containing the fragrance of the plant from which it is taken.  
**esteem** (ē-stēm', ī-stēm') *n.* High rank; renown.  
**ethical** (ēth'ī-kəl) *adj.* Having to do with what is considered to be right or wrong behavior.



**ethics** (ĕth'ĭks) *n. pl.* **1.** The study of standards of behavior. **2.** Rules governing the conduct of people within certain groups.

**ethnic** (ĕth'nĭk) *adj.* Characteristic of a particular national, racial, cultural, or religious group.

**evasive** (ĭ-vās'ĭv) *adj.* Vague; not straightforward.—**evasively** *adv.*

**evoke** (ĭ-vōk) *v.* To call forth.

**ewe** (yōō) *n.* A female sheep.

**exact** (ĕg-zākt', ĭg-) *v.* To force payment or the giving up of something.

**exalted** (ĕg-zōl'tĭd, ĭg-) *adj.* Of elevated rank or status.

**exasperate** (ĕg-zās'pā-rāt', ĭg-) *v.* To irritate; annoy.

**exceeding** (ĕk-sē'dĭng, ĭk-) *adj.* Extreme.

**excess** (ĕk-sēs', ĭk-, ĕk'sēs') *n.* A quantity that is more than required or desirable.

**exclusive** (ĕks-klōō'sĭv, ĭks-) *adj.* Not shared with another person.

**excruciating** (ĕk-skrōō'shē-ā'tĭng, ĭk-) *adj.* Intense.

**excursion** (ĕk-skūr'zhən, ĭk-) *n.* A round trip, usually very short and taken for pleasure.

**execrate** (ĕk-sĭ-krāt) *v.* To curse; denounce.

**exhilaration** (ĕg-zĭl ə-rā'shən, ĭg-) *n.* Excitement.

**exigency** (ĕk'sə-jən-sē) *n.* An emergency.

**exorbitant** (ĕg-zōr'bə-tənt, ĭg-) *adj.* Unreasonably high.

**exotic** (ĕg-zōt'ĭk, ĭg-) *adj.* From a faraway and fantastic place.

**expatriate** (ĕks-pā'trē-āt') *v.* To exile.

**expeditious** (ĕk'spə-dish'əs) *adj.* Fast and efficient.

**expend** (ĕk-spēnd', ĭk-) *v.* To use up.

**explicit** (ĕk-splĭs'ĭt, ĭk-) *adj.* Definite.

**expound** (ĕk-spəund', ĭk-) *v.* To explain in detail.

**expulsion** (ĕk-spŭl'shən, ĭk-) *n.* A forcing out of someone from a group or organization.

**exquisite** (ĕks'kwĭ-zĭt) *adj.* Intense.—**exquisitely** *adv.*

**extract** (ĕk'strākt) *n.* An excerpt; passage.

**extravagance** (ĕk-strāv'ə-gəns, ĭk-) *n.* Wastefulness.

**extricate** (ĕk'strĭ-kāt) *v.* To get out of an entanglement.

**exuberant** (ĕg-zōō'bər-ənt) *adj.* Lively.

**exude** (ĕg-zōōd', ĭg-, ĕk-soōd', ĭk-) *v.* To give off or emit.

**exultant** (ĕg-zŭl'tənt, ĭg-) *adj.* Joyful.

**exultation** (ĕg'zŭl-tā'shən) *n.* Rejoicing or triumph.

## F

**fabulous** (fāb'yə-ləs) *adj.* Unbelievable.

**factor** (fāc'tər) *n.* Element.

**fain** (fān) *adv.* Gladly.

**famished** (fām'ĭsht) *adj.* Starving.

**fanatic** (fā-nāt'-ĭk) *n.* A person whose devotion to a cause is excessive or unreasonable.

**fancy** (fān'sē) *n.* Imagination; creativeness.

**fastidious** (fā-stĭd'ĕ-əs, fə-) *adj.* Extremely fussy about personal cleanliness and appearance.

**fealty** (fē-əl-tē) *n.* Loyalty.

**feasible** (fē'zə-bəl) *adj.* Capable of being done.—**feasibility** *n.*

**felicitous** (fĭ-lis'ə-təs) *adj.* Suitable to a specific purpose.

**felon** (fĕl'ən) *n.* Criminal.

**ferocity** (fə-rōs'-ə-tē) *n.* Fierceness.

**fervent** (fŭr'vənt) *adj.* Having or showing intense feeling.

**fervid** (fŭr'vĭd) *adj.* Full of emotion.

**fester** (fĕs'tər) *v.* To develop pus; rot.

**fetter** (fĕt'ər) *v.* To chain.

**filament** (fĭl'ə-mənt) *n.* The fine metal wire in an electric light bulb.

**finicky** (fin'ĭ-kē) *adj.* Extremely fussy. —**finickiness** *n.*

**flagon** (flāg'ən) *n.* A large container for liquids, as wine or liquor.

**flail** (flāl) *v.* To strike.

**flamboyance** (flām-boi'əns) *n.* Showy behavior.

**flare** (flār) *n.* To curve outward.

**flawless** (flō'ləs) *adj.* Perfect.

**flax** (flāks) *n.* Plants whose seeds produce linseed oil and whose fibers are spun into linen cloth.

**florid** (flōr'id, flōr'-) *adj.* **1.** Rosy. **2.** Flowery.

**flounder** (floun'dər) *v.* To move with difficulty, as in mud or water.

**flout** (flout) *v.* To be scornful of.

**folly** (fōl'ē) *n.* Foolishness.

**foray** (fōr'ā') *n.* A raid.

**forestay** (fōr'stā', fōr'-) *n.* A rope supporting the front mast of a ship.

ā pat/ā pay/ār care/ā father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/ĭ pit/ĭ pie/ĭr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ā Fr. ami/ce Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ū Fr. tu, Ger. über/KH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.

**forfeit** (fôr'fît) *n.* Something a person must give up as punishment for breaking the law or rules of a game.  
**forfeiture** (fôr'fi-chôor') *n.* The act of giving up something as a penalty or fine.  
**formidable** (fôr'mă-dă-bəl) *adj.* 1. Causing fear. 2. Very impressive because of skill or strength.  
**formulate** (fôr'myă-lăr') *v.* To express or state.  
**fortitude** (fôr'tă-tôod', -tyôod') *n.* Ability to bear pain and misfortune.  
**founder** (foun'dər) *v.* To sink.  
**frantic** (frăn'tik) *adj.* Excessively emotional.  
**fraternal** (fră-tûr'nəl) *adj.* Brotherly.  
**fray** (fră) *n.* A fight.  
**frenetic** (fră-nêt'ik) *adj.* Wild; frantic.  
**fuddle** (füd'l) *n.* Confusion.  
**furtive** (fûr'tiv) *adj.* Done in a sly or secret way.  
**fusillade** (fyoo'să-lăd, -lăd', fyoo'zə-) *n.* A firing of many firearms, either at the same time or rapidly and continuously.  
**futile** (fyoot'ul, fyootil') *adj.* Useless.

## G

**gad** (găd) *v.* To wander about seeking amusement.  
**gaît** (gât) *n.* 1. A particular way of walking or running. 2. The usual speed at which certain movements are performed.  
**galore** (gă-lôr', -lôr') *adj.* In abundance.  
**game** (gām) *adj.* 1. Spirited. 2. Ready and willing.  
**gamut** (găm'ət) *n.* The complete range of something.  
**garland** (găr'lənd) *n.* A circlet or string of flowers.  
**garnish** (găr'nish) *v.* To give food some decoration to improve its taste or its appearance.  
**garret** (găr'it) *n.* The attic.  
**gauge** (găj) *v.* To evaluate; estimate.  
**gavel** (găv'əl) *n.* A small, wooden hammer used to signal for silence.  
**genial** (jên'yəl, jē'nē-əl) *adj.* Pleasant; friendly.  
**gesticulation** (jē-stik'yə-lă'shən) *n.* A movement of a part of the body to express something.  
**geyser** (gi'zər) *n.* A spring that periodically gushes columns of hot water and steam into the air.  
**gingerly** (jin'jər-lē) *adv.* With great care or caution.  
**girdler** (gûrd'lər) *n.* One that encircles something.  
**girth** (gûrth) *n.* Circumference.  
**glade** (glăd) *n.* An open area in a forest.  
**glint** (glînt) *n.* To sparkle.

**gloat** (glôt) *v.* To feel great pleasure over another's loss or suffering.  
**gnarled** (nărlđ) *adj.* Lumpy and twisted.  
**gnaw** (nô) *v.* To eat away at; torment.  
**goad** (gôd) *v.* To urge on.  
**gorge** (gôrj) *v.* To eat greedily.  
**gosling** (gôz'ling) *n.* A young goose.  
**graft** (grăft, grăft) *v.* To join a part of one plant to another in order to produce a certain kind of fruit or flower.  
**granite** (grăn'it) *n.* A hard, gray rock.  
**grapple** (grăp'əl) *n.* A grip or clutch.  
**gravity** (grăv'ə-tē) *n.* Seriousness.  
**grimace** (grî-măs', grîm'is) *v.* To twist the face in pain or disgust.  
**grist** (grîst) *n.* 1. Grain that has been ground. 2. Something produced by grinding.  
**groin** (groin) *n.* The fold in the body where the trunk meets the thigh.  
**grotesque** (grô-těsk') *adj.* Odd; fantastic.  
**grovel** (grûv'əl, grôv'-) *v.* To cringe.  
**guile** (gîl) *n.* Cunning; slyness.  
**guise** (gîz) *n.* Style of dress.  
**gullible** (gûl'ə-bəl) *adj.* Easily fooled or convinced.  
**gyrate** (jî'răt) *v.* To rotate; whirl.

## H

**habituate** (hă-bich'ôo-ăt') *v.* To get used to something through frequent and repeated exposure.  
**haggard** (hăg'ərd) *adj.* Having a very exhausted appearance.  
**halcyon** (hăl'sē-ən) *adj.* From an earlier, happier time.  
**hale** (hāl) *adj.* Strong.  
**haunch** (hônch, hānch) *n.* The hip, buttock, and thigh.  
**haversack** (hăv'ər-săk') *n.* A canvas bag used to carry supplies.  
**hearken** (hăr'kən) *v.* To listen to.  
**heathen** (hē'thən) *n. pl.* People who worship many gods and idols.  
**heed** (hēd) *n.* Careful consideration.  
**henna** (hěn'ə) *n.* A plant of North Africa and Asia that yields a red dye.  
**herald** (hēr'əld) *n.* A person or thing that announces important news or events to come.  
**heresy** (hēr'ə-sē) *n.* Controversial belief.  
**hermitage** (hûr'mă-tij) *n.* A place to live that is away from other people.

**hew** (hyōō) *v.* To make or shape by cutting with an ax.

**hideous** (hīd'ē-əs) *adj.* Ugly.

**hie** (hī) *v.* To hurry.

**hoist** (hoist) *v.* To lift.

**hone** (hōn) *v.* To sharpen on a hard stone.

**hover** (hūv'ər, hōv'-) *v.* To float in the air or move back and forth near a particular place.

**humidor** (hyōō'mə-dōr) *n.* A case provided with a moisturizing device to keep tobacco products fresh.

**humiliate** (hyōō-mīl'ē-āt') *n.* To hurt someone's pride or feelings; degrade.

**humiliation** (hyōō-mīl'ē-ā'shən) *n.* Disgrace; shame.

**hurtle** (hūrt'l) *v.* To throw with great force.

**I**

**idol** (īd'l) *n.* A false god.

**idolatry** (ī-dōl'ə-trē) *n.* Extreme devotion to a person or thing.

**ignominious** (īg'nō-mīn'ē-əs) *adj.* Disgraceful.—**ignominiously** *adv.*

**ignoramus** (īg'nə-rā'məs) *n.* A stupid person.

**illuminate** (ī-lōō'mə-nāt') *v.* **1.** To explain. **2.** To decorate a handwritten book with colorful designs or pictures.

**imbecile** (īm'bə-sīl,-səl) *n.* A severely retarded person.

**imminent** (īm'ə-nənt) *adj.* About to happen.

**immobile** (ī-mō'bəl, -bēl') *adj.* Not moving.

**immortals** (ī-mōrt'lz) *n. pl.* The gods of ancient Greece and Rome.

**immune** (ī-myōōn') *adj.* Not affected by something.

**impact** (īm'pākt') *n.* A forceful coming together.

**impale** (īm-pāl') *v.* To pierce with something pointed.—**impaled** *adj.*

**impart** (īm-pārt') *v.* **1.** To give. **2.** To make known.

**impartial** (īm-pār'shəl) *adj.* Showing no favoritism.—**impartiality** (īm'pār-shē-āl'ə-tē) *n.*

**impel** (īm-pel') *v.* To drive or urge.

**impend** (īm-pēnd') *v.* To be about to happen; threaten.

**impenetrable** (īm-pēn'ə-trə-bəl) *adj.* Unable to be passed through.

**imperative** (īm-pēr'ə-tīv) *adj.* Urgent.

**imperceptible** (īm'pər-sēp'tə-bəl) *adj.* Hardly noticeable; gradual.—**imperceptibly** *adv.*

**imperial** (īm-pīr'ē-əl) *adj.* Outstanding; majestic.

**imperial** (īm-pīr'ē-əs) *adj.* Domineering; arrogant.

**impetuosity** (īm-pēch'ōō-ōs'ə-tē) *n.* An impulsive act.

**impetuous** (īm-pēch'ōō-əs) *adj.* Acting suddenly without much thought.—**impetuously** *adv.*

**impinge** (īm-pīnj') *v.* To make an impression on.

**implacable** (īm-plāk'ə-bəl, -plak'ə-bəl) *adj.* **1.** Incapable of being calmed. **2.** Unforgiving.

**imply** (īm-plī') *v.* To suggest.

**import** (īm'pōrt', -pōrt') *n.* Significance.

**impose** (īm-pōz') *v.* To establish with authority.

**impostor** (īm-pōs'tər) *n.* A person who pretends to be something he or she is not.

**imprecation** (īm'prə-ka'shən) *n.* A curse.

**impregnable** (īm-prēg'nə-bəl) *adj.* Unshakable; above question or criticism.

**impromptu** (īm-prōmp'tōō, -tyōō) *adj.* Done on the spur of the moment.

**imprudent** (īm-prōō'dənt) *adj.* Unwise.

**impudence** (īm'pyə-dəns) *n.* Bold, shameless behavior.

**impudent** (īm'pyə-dənt) *adj.* Disrespectful.

**impulse** (īm'pūls') *n.* A sudden desire to do something.

**impunity** (īm-pyōō'nə-tē) *n.* Protection against punishment.

**inaccessible** (īn'āk-sēs'ə-bəl) *adj.* Unapproachable.—**inaccessibility** *n.*

**inadvertent** (īn'əd-vūr'tənt) *adj.* Unintentional.—**inadvertently** *adv.*

**inaptitude** (īn-āp'tə-tōōd', -tyōōd') *n.* Lack of ability.

**incantation** (īn'kän-tā'shən) *n.* The chanting of magical words to cast a spell.—**incantatory** (īn'kän'tə-tōr'e) *adj.*

**incautious** (īn-kō'shəs) *adj.* Not careful.—**incautiously** *adv.*

**inception** (īn-sēp'shən) *n.* The origin of something.

**incessant** (īn-sēs'ənt) *adj.* Continuous.—**incessantly** *adv.*

ā pat/ā pay/ā care/ā father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f five/g gag/h hat/hw which/t pit/ī pie/īr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ā *Fr.* ami/c *Fr.* feu, *Ger.* schön/ū *Fr.* tu, *Ger.* über/KH *Ger.* ich, *Scot.* loch/N *Fr.* bon.



**incoherent** (in'kō-hīr'ənt) *adj.* Unconnected; rambling.

**incompatible** (in'kəm-pāt'ə-bəl) *adj.* Conflicting.

**incomprehensible** (in'kōm-pri-hēn'sə-bəl, in-kōm'-) *adj.* Not understandable.

**inconceivable** (in'kən-sē'və-bəl) *adj.* Unbelievable.

**inconsequential** (in-kōn'sə-kwēn'shəl) *adj.* Unimportant.

**inconsolable** (in'kən'sō'lə-bəl) *adj.* Unable to be comforted.

**incorruptible** (in'kə'rūp'tə-bəl) *adj.* Not subject to becoming immoral or dishonest.

**incredulity** (in'krə-dōō'lə-tē, -dyōō'lə-tē) *n.* Disbelief.

**incubation** (in'kyə-bā'shən, ing'-) *n.* The period during which eggs are developed and hatched.

**incursion** (in'kūr'zhən, -shən) *n.* A sudden entering into.

**indecipherable** (in'dī-sī'fər-ə-bəl) *adj.* That cannot be made understandable.

**indifference** (in-dīf'ər-əns) *n.* A lack of interest.

**indifferent** (in-dīf'ər-ənt) *adj.* 1. Without interest in. 2. Uninvolved.

**indignation** (in'dīg-nā'shən) *n.* Anger.

**indiscriminate** (in'dis-krim'ə-nīt) *adj.* 1. Haphazard. 2. Unrestrained.—**indiscriminately** *adv.*

**indisputable** (in'dis-pyōō'tə-bəl) *adj.* Undeniable.

**indolent** (in'də-lənt) *adj.* Lazy.—**indolently** *adv.*

**ineffectual** (in'ī-fēk'chōō-əl) *adj.* Not producing a desired result.—**ineffectually** *adv.*

**inequity** (in-ēk'wə-tē) *n.* Unfairness.

**inevitable** (in-ēv'ə-tə-bəl) *adj.* Unavoidable.—**inevitably** *adv.*

**inexplicable** (in-ēk'splī-kə-bəl, in'īk-splīk'-ə-bəl) *adj.* Not possible to explain.

**inextricable** (in-ēk'strī'kə-bəl) *adj.* Too intricate to be disentangled.—**inextricably** *adv.*

**infallible** (in-fāl'ə-bəl) *adj.* Not capable of error.—**infallibility** *n.*

**infamous** (in'fə-məs) *adj.* Outrageous.

**infer** (in-fūr') *v.* To conclude from available facts.

**infernal** (in-fūr'nəl) *adj.* Hellish; fiendish.

**infest** (in-fēst') *v.* To swarm over in a destructive way.

**inflammatory** (in-flām'ə-tōr'ē, tōr'ē) *adj.* Fiery.

**inflexible** (in-flēk'sə-bəl) *adj.* Stubborn.

**infuse** (in-fyōōz') *v.* To put into as by pouring.

**ingenuity** (in'jə-nōō'ə-tē, -nyōō'ə-tē) *n.* Cleverness.

**ingrate** (in'grāt) *n.* An ungrateful person.

**injudicious** (in'jōō-dīsh'əs) *adj.* Unwise.

**injunction** (in-jūngk'shən) *n.* A command.

**innards** (in'ərdz) *n. pl.* The intestines and other internal organs of the body.

**innovation** (in'ə-vā'shən) *n.* A change.

**insatiable** (in-sā'shə-bəl, -shē-ə-bəl) *adj.* Not capable of being satisfied.

**inscription** (in-skrīp'shən) *n.* A short message written on or carved into a hard surface.

**inscrutable** (in-skrōō'tə-bəl) *adj.* Mysterious.

**insidious** (in-sīd'ē-əs) *adj.* 1. Treacherous. 2. Stealthy.

**insinuating** (in-sīn'yōō-ā'tīng) *adj.* Arousing doubts and suspicions.—**insinuatingly** *adv.*

**insolent** (in'sə-lənt) *adj.* Bold in a reckless way.

**insolvent** (in-sōl'vənt) *adj.* Not able to pay debts.

**instigate** (in'stī-gāt') *v.* To stir up.

**institute** (in-stə-tōōt, -tyōōt') *v.* To start.

**insufferable** (in-sūf'ər-ə-bəl) *adj.* Unbearable.—**insufferably** *adv.*

**insupportable** (in'sə-pōr'tə-bəl, -pōr'tə-bəl) *adj.* Unbearable.

**intact** (in-tākt') *adj.* Whole; undamaged.

**integrity** (in-tēg'rə-tē) *n.* Honesty; sincerity and strength of character.

**inter** (in-tūr') *v.* To bury.

**interlope** (in'tər-lōp') *v.* To intrude; meddle.—**interloper** *n.*

**interment** (in-tūr'mənt) *n.* Burial.

**interpose** (in'tər-pōz') *v.* 1. To introduce an interrupting remark in a conversation. 2. To come between as a settling force.—**interposition** (in'tər-pə-zīsh'ən) *n.*

**interstice** (in-tūr'stīs) *n.* A small, narrow space between parts of a thing.

**intervene** (in'tər-vēn') *v.* To come in as an influencing force.

**intimacy** (in'tə-mə-sē) *n.* A close and familiar relationship.

**intimate** (in'tə-mīt) *adj.* Close and familiar.

**intimate** (in'tə-māt') *v.* To hint.

**intolerable** (in-tōl'ər-ə-bəl) *adj.* Unbearable.

**intoxicate** (in-tōk'sī-kāt') *v.* To make drunk. 2. To excite.

**intricate** (in'trī-kīt) *adj.* Full of detail; complicated.

**intrigue** (in'trēg', in-trēg') *v.* To scheme secretly.—**intriguer** *n.*

**intrinsic** (in-trīn'sīk) *adj.* Essential.

**intrusion** (in-trōō'zhən) *n.* An uninvited or illegal entry.

**invariable** (in'vār'ē-ə-bəl) *adj.* Constant.—**invariably** *adv.*

**inveterate** (in'vēt'ər-īt) *adj.* By custom or habit.

**invocation** (in'və-kā'shən) *n.* **1.** A serious request. **2.** A prayer asking for help.

**iridescent** (ir'ə-dēs'ənt) *adj.* Bright and shifting in color.

**irrational** (i-rāsh'ən-əl) *adj.* Senseless.—**irrationally** *adv.*

**irresolute** (i-rēz'ə-lōōt) *adj.* Undecided.

**irrevocable** (i-rēv'ə-kə-bəl) *adj.* Incapable of being undone.

## J

**jar** (jār) *v.* To make an irritating sound.

**jostle** (jōs'əl) *v.* To push and shove in a crowd.

**joust** (jüst, joust, jōōst) *n.* A fight with lances between two people on horseback.

**jowl** (jou) *n.* The flesh under the jaw.

**joyful** (jōō'bə-lənt) *adj.* Joyful.—**joyfully** *adv.*

**judicial** (jōō-dīsh'əl) *adj.* Showing careful consideration of all sides of a problem when making a decision.

## K

**kibitzer** (kīb'it-sər) *n.* *Informal.* A meddler who gives unwanted advice.

## L

**labyrinth** (lab'ə-rīnth') *n.* A structure with winding passages.

**lacerated** (lās'ə-rā'tīd) *adj.* Wounded; torn.

**lair** (lār) *n.* The home of a wild animal.

**lament** (lə-mēnt') *v.* To grieve for.

**lamentable** (lām'ən-tə-bəl, lə-mēn'-) *adj.* Distressing.

**lance** (läns, läns) *n.* A thrusting weapon having a wooden shaft and a pointed metal tip.

**languid** (läng'gwīd) *adj.* Lacking energy.

**languish** (läng'gwīsh) *v.* **1.** To become weak. **2.** To long or pine for something.—*n.* *Obsolete.* Weakness.

**lapse** (läps) *n.* A minor fault or error.

**larceny** (lār'sə-nē) *n.* Theft.

**larder** (lār'dər) *n.* A storage room for household food supplies.

**lascar** (lās'kər) *n.* A sailor from India.

**lateral** (lät'ər-əl) *adj.* Situated at the side.—*n.* In football, a pass thrown sidewise.—**laterally** *adv.*

**lax** (läks) *adj.* Careless.

**legacy** (lēg'ə-sē) *n.* Something handed down from the past.

**lenient** (lē'nē-ənt, lēn'yənt) *adj.* Generous.—**leniently** *adv.*

**lethargy** (lēth'ər-jē) *n.* Sluggishness; lack of energy.

**literal** (līt'ər-əl) *adj.* Real.—**literally** *adv.*

**lithe** (lith) *adj.* Limber.

**livid** (līv'id) *adj.* Extremely pale.

**loam** (lōm) *n.* Rich, dark soil.

**loath** (lōth, lōth) *adj.* Unwilling.

**loathsome** (lōth'səm, lōth'-) *adj.* Disgusting.

**loll** (löl) *v.* To lounge; recline in a relaxed way.

**longitudinal** (lōn'jə-tōōd'n-əl, -tyōōd'n-əl) *adj.* Lengthwise.

**lop** (löp) *v.* To cut off.

**lope** (löp) *v.* To move with a steady, easy stride.

**lore** (lör, lör) *n.* The accumulated information on a particular subject.

**lounge** (lounj) *v.* **1.** To spend time idly. **2.** To move in a relaxed way.

**lout** (lout) *n.* A stupid person.

**lucrative** (lōō'krə-tīv) *adj.* Profitable.

**lugger** (lүg'ər) *n.* A small sailing vessel.

**luminous** (lōō'mə-nəs) *adj.* Giving off light.

**lunacy** (lōō'nə-sē) *n.* **1.** Insanity. **2.** Very foolish behavior.

**lunatic** (lōō'nə-tīk) *adj.* **1.** Insane. **2.** Exceedingly foolish.

**lurch** (lүrch) *v.* To fall and rise abruptly.

**lurid** (lōör'id) *adj.* Passionate; vivid.

**lusterless** (lүs'tər-ləs) *adj.* Dull.

## M

**magnanimity** (mäg'nə-nīm'i-tē) *n.* Nobility and generosity of spirit.

**magnanimous** (mäg-nän'ə-məs) *adj.* Noble in mind and heart.

**magnetize** (mäg'nə-tīz') *v.* **1.** To attract. **2.** To have a strong influence upon.

**malevolence** (mə-lēv'ə-ləns) *n.* A feeling of extreme ill will toward others.

**malice** (mäl'is) *n.* A desire to be hurtful to others.

**malignant** (mə-līg'nənt) *adj.* Very harmful.

**mammoth** (mäm'əth) *adj.* Gigantic.

**manacle** (män'ə-kəl) *v.* To handcuff.

ä pat/ä pay/är care/ä father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē bēf five/g gag/h hau/hw which/ī pi/ī pie/īr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ä Fr. ami/œ Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ü Fr. tu, Ger. über/KH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.

**maneuver** (mə-nōō'vər) *v.* To move in a purposeful and skilled way for a particular reason.

**martial** (mār'shəl) *adj.* Military.

**martinet** (mār'tə-nēt') *n.* Someone who demands very strict observance of rules.

**martyr** (mār'tər) *v.* To torture.

**masonry** (mā'sən-rē) *n.* Brickwork or stonework.

**massive** (mās'iv) *adj.* 1. Very large. 2. Of such an extent to make a deep impression.

**mattock** (māt'ək) *n.* A digging tool similar to a pickaxe.

**maudlin** (môd'lin) *adj.* Tearfully sentimental.

**meager** (mē'gər) *adj.* A small amount.

**meandering** (mē-ān'dər-ing) *adj.* Winding; changing course.

**medieval** (mē'dē-ē'vəl, mēd'ē-'vəl) *adj.* Pertaining to the Middle Ages.

**meditate** (mēd'ə-tāt') *v.* To think deeply.

**meditation** (mēd'ə-tā'shən) *n.* Deep thoughtfulness.

**meditative** (mēd'ə-tā'tiv) *adj.* In deep thoughtfulness; pensive.

**melodramatic** (mēl'ə-drə-māt'ik) *adj.* Highly exciting or emotional.

**menace** (mēn'is) *n.* A harmful person or thing.

**mentality** (mēn-tāl'ə-tē) *n.* Cast of mind.

**merit** (mēr'it) *v.* To deserve.

**meteorite** (mē'tē-ə-rīt') *n.* The part of a larger body from outer space that falls to the earth's surface.

**methodical** (mə-thōd'ī-kəl) *adj.* Orderly; systematic.

**meticulous** (mə-tīk'yə-ləs) *adj.* Extremely precise.

**mettle** (mēt'l) *n.* Courage.

**mime** (mīm) *n.* A form of drama that uses movements of the body instead of words to put across ideas.

**minaret** (mīn'ə-rēt') *n.* A tall slender tower attached to a mosque.

**miscreant** (mīs'krē-ənt) *n.* A wicked person.

**moderate** (mōd'ə-rāt') *v.* To become mild.

**modulate** (mōj'ōo-lāt', mōd'yə-) *v.* 1. To regulate or vary the pitch of the voice or a musical instrument. 2. To change pitch within a musical composition.

**momentum** (mō-mēn'təm) *n.* The force that keeps an object moving.

**monitor** (mōn'ə-tər) *n.* A device used to record or regulate the performance of some machine or process.

**mooch** (mōoch) *v.* To loaf.

**moral** (môr'l, mōr'-) *adj.* Concerned with what is right or wrong behavior.

**morbid** (môr'bid) *adj.* Gruesome.

**morose** (mə-rōs', mō-) *adj.* Gloomy.

**morsel** (môr'səl) *n.* A small amount.

**mortification** (môr'tə-fī-kā'shən) *n.* Humiliation.

**mortify** (môr'tə-fī') *v.* 1. To humiliate. 2. To decay because of injury or disease.

**mosaic** (mō-zā'ik) *n.* A picture or design made by setting small pieces of colored glass or clay in mortar.

**mosque** (mōsk) *n.* A Moslem house of worship.

**motley** (mōt'lē) *adj.* Composed of many different and unrelated elements or colors. *n.* A clown costume.

**mottle** (mōt'l) *v.* To streak or spot with many colors.

**multitude** (mūl'tə-tōd', -tyōd') *n.* A large number of individuals.

**muster** (mūs'tər) *v.* To gather together.—*n.* An assembly.

**mute** (myōot) *adj.* Unable to speak.—**mutely** *adv.*

**mutilate** (myōot'l-āt') *v.* To cut off or make useless a part of the body.—**mutilation** *n.*

**mutinous** (myōot'n-əs) *adj.* Rebellious.

**myriad** (mīr'ē-əd) *adj.* A great number.

**mythic** (mīth'ik) *adj.* Imaginary.

## N

**naive** (nā-ēv') *adj.* Not worldly-wise.

**niche** (nich) *n.* A hollow place in a wall.

**niggardly** (nīg'ərd-lē) *adj.* Stingy.

**ninny** (nin'ē) *n.* A fool.

**niter** (nī'tər) *n.* A white or gray hardened form of potassium nitrate.

**nocturne** (nōk'turn') *n.* A dreamy or romantic composition, often for the piano.

**nomenclature** (nō'mən-klā'chər, nō-mēn'klā-chər) *n.* A set of names for a particular group of things.

**nonchalant** (nōn'shə-lānt') *adj.* Casual; unconcerned.

**nondescript** (nōn'dī-skript') *adj.* Lacking individual character.

**nucleus** (nōō'klē-əs, nyōō-) *n.* Center or core.

**nuptial** (nūp'shəl) *n.* A wedding.

**nurture** (nūr-chər) *v.* To nourish.

**nuzzle** (nūz'əl) *v.* To snuggle.

**nymph** (nīmf) *n.* A nature goddess.

## O

**obituary** (ō-bīch'ōō-ēr'-ē) *n.* A death notice that includes a short description of the dead person's life.



**obligatory** (ə-blīg'ə-tôr'ē) *adj.* Compulsory.  
**oblivious** (ə-blīv'ē-əs) *adj.* Unaware.  
**obnoxious** (ɒb-nɒk'shəs, əb-) *adj.* Hateful.  
**obsidian** (ɒb-sid'ē-ən) *n.* Hard volcanic glass.  
**ocher** (ɒ-kər) *n.* A yellow or reddish-brown color.  
**ointment** (ɔint'mənt) *n.* A salve.  
**ominous** (ɒm'ə-nəs) *adj.* Threatening.—**ominously** *adv.*  
**omnipotent** (ɒm-nīp'ə-tənt) *adj.* All-powerful.  
**opaque** (ō-pāk') *adj.* Not letting light through.  
**opiate** (ō'pē-īt, -āt') *n.* Something that soothes.  
**oppression** (ə-prēsh'ən) *n.* Something that weighs heavily on the mind, body, or senses.  
**oppressive** (ə-prēs'iv) *adj.* Hard to bear.  
**option** (öp'shən) *n.* A choice.  
**oracle** (ôr'ə-kəl, ôr'-) *n.* Something or someone believed to be a source of wisdom.  
**oration** (ô-rā'shən, ô-ra') *n.* A formal speech given at a formal ceremony.  
**orator** (ôr'ə-tər, ôr') *n.* A skilled public speaker.  
**orb** (ôrb) *n.* An eye.  
**orbit** (ôr'bit) *n.* Eye socket.  
**ordnance** (ôrd'nəns) *n.* Military weaponry.  
**ornamental** (ôr'nə-mén'təl) *adj.* Made fancy with decorations.  
**ornate** (ôr-nāt') *adj.* Heavily decorated.  
**orthodox** (ôr'thə-döks') *adj.* Conventional; accepted.—**orthodoxy** *n.*  
**overweening** (ô'vər-wē'nīng) *adj.* Overbearing.

## I

**padre** (pă'drā, -drē) *n.* A title used in addressing a priest.  
**palate** (pāl'it) *n.* The sense of taste.  
**palatial** (pə-lā'shəl) *adj.* Magnificent, like a palace.  
**pal** (pól) *n.* Anything dark and gloomy that covers or wraps around something.  
**palpable** (pāl'pə-bəl) *adj.* Capable of being touched.  
**palpitation** (pāl'pə-tā'shən) *n.* An irregular and rapid beating of the heart.  
**palter** (pól'tər) *v.* To argue about terms, prices, etc.  
**pandemonium** (păn'də-mō'nē-əm) *n.* Wild noise and disorder.  
**pantomime** (păn'tə-mīm') *n.* A drama performed solely with actions and gestures.

**parable** (păr'ə-bəl) *n.* A short, simple story teaching a moral or religious lesson.  
**paradox** (păr'ə-döks') *n.* A situation or statement that has contradictory qualities.—**paradoxical** *adj.*  
**paragon** (păr'ə-gŏn', -gən) *n.* Model of excellence.  
**paramour** (păr'ə-mōōr') *n.* A lover.  
**parapet** (păr'ə-pīt, pēt') *n.* A low wall or railing around the edge of a roof or bridge.  
**parity** (păr'i-tē) *n.* Equal price or quality of farm products.  
**parley** (păr'lē) *n.* A discussion held to settle a dispute.  
**paroxysm** (păr'ək-sīz'm) *n.* A sudden fit or spasm.  
**partridge** (păr'trij) *adj.* A wild bird hunted for sport or food.  
**pathetic** (pə-thēt'ik) *adj.* Arousing pity.—**pathetically** *adv.*  
**patronize** (pā'trə-nīz', pāt'rə-) *v.* To treat others with an air of superiority.  
**pavilion** (pə-vīl'yən) *n.* A large, elegant tent such as those used during the Middle Ages.  
**pedigree** (pēd'ə-grē') *n.* Ancestry.  
**peeve** (pēv) *v.* To annoy.  
**pelt** (pēlt) *v.* To pound steadily and heavily.  
**penitent** (pēn'ə-tənt) *adj.* Feeling and expressing shame for having done something wrong.  
**—penitently** *adv.*  
**penitential** (pēn'ə-tēn'shəl) *adj.* Expressing remorse for one's wrongs.  
**pennant** (pēn'ənt) *n.* A flag.  
**pensive** (pen'siv) *adj.* Thoughtful.  
**penury** (pēn'yə-rē) *n.* Poverty.  
**perceive** (pər-sēv') *v.* To become aware of something.  
**perceptible** (pər-sēp'tə-bəl) *adj.* Noticeable; recognizable.  
**perception** (pər-sēp'shən) *n.* 1. Awareness. 2. Insight or understanding.  
**perdition** (pər-dish'ən) *n.* Hell.  
**perjury** (pūr'jə-rē) *n.* The telling of a lie while swearing to tell the truth.  
**pernicious** (pər-nish'əs) *adj.* Destructive; deadly.  
**perplex** (pər-plēks') *v.* To confuse.  
**persistent** (pər-sīs'tənt, zīs'tənt) *adj.* Stubborn.—**persistently** *adv.*

ă pat/ă pay/ăr care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/i pit/i pie/ir pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ô pot/ô toe/ô paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ôô took/ôô boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tigh/t thin, path/th this, bathe/û cut/ûr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ă Fr. ami/cr Fr. feu, Ger. schön/û Fr. tu, Ger. über/kh Ger. ich, Scot. loch/n Fr. bon.

**pert** (pûrt) *adj.* Saucy.  
**peruse** (pə-rōōz') *v.* To read; study.  
**perverse** (pər-vûrs') *adj.* Contrary to what is considered to be correct thinking or behavior.  
**perverted** (pər-vûr'tîd) *adj.* Evil.  
**petition** (pə-tîsh'n) *n.* A formal request to a person or group in authority.  
**pettish** (pēt'îsh) *adj.* Irritable.—**pettishly** *adv.*  
**pewter** (pyōō'tər) *n.* A dull, grayish alloy that has tin as its major metal.  
**phenomenon** (fi-nôm'ə-nôn) *n.* 1. Something that can be seen but is difficult to understand. 2. An unusual occurrence.  
**philanthropist** (fi-lân'thrə-pîst) *n.* A person of means who helps less fortunate people.  
**pilgrimage** (pîl'grə-mîj) *n.* Any long journey for a particular purpose.  
**pillage** (pîl'ij) *v.* To loot; damage.  
**pinion** (pîn'yən) *n.* A bird's wing.  
**pinnacle** (pîn'ə-kəl) *n.* A peak.  
**pious** (pi'əs) *adj.* Showing religious devotion.  
**pique** (pēk) *v.* To cause a feeling of resentment.  
**placable** (plāk'ə-bəl, plā'kə-) *adj.* Capable of being calmed or soothed.  
**placard** (plāk'ărd', -ərd) *n.* A poster used to make a public announcement.  
**placid** (plās'id) *adj.* Calm.—**placidly** *adv.*  
**plaintiff** (plān'tîf) *n.* The party that brings suit in court.  
**plaintive** (plān'tîv) *adj.* Sad.—**plaintively** *adv.*  
**pliancy** (pli'ən-sē) *n.* The quality of being supple or flexible.  
**pliant** (pli'ənt) *adj.* Flexible.  
**ploy** (poi) *n.* A trick or stratagem.  
**plumb** (plūm) *adv.* Exactly.  
**plunder** (plūn'dər) *n.* Property taken by force.  
**poacher** (pō'chər) *n.* Someone who hunts or fishes unlawfully on the property of another.  
**poise** (poi) *n.* Dignified and serene behavior.  
**pommel** (pūm'əl, pōm'-) *n.* The rounded, front part of a saddle.  
**ponderous** (pōn'dər-əs) *adj.* Extremely heavy.—**ponderously** *adv.*  
**portentous** (pōr-tēn'təs, pōr-) *adj.* Threatening.  
**posture** (pōs'chər) *v.* To take on a bodily or mental attitude to produce a desired effect.  
**pounce** (pouns) *v.* To spring.  
**prate** (prāt) *v.* To chatter.  
**precarious** (pri-kār'ē-əs) *adj.* 1. Insecure. 2. Based on unproved statements or conclusions.—**precariously** *adv.*

**preclude** (pri-klōōd') *v.* To make impossible.  
**predatory** (prēd'ə-tōr'ē) *adj.* Living by catching and eating other animals.  
**predominate** (pri-dōm'ə-nāt) *v.* To be greater in quantity.  
**prejudice** (prēj'ə-dîs) *n.* An opinion, usually unfavorable, formed before knowing all the facts about a person or thing.  
**preliminary** (pri-lîm'ə-nēr'ē) *adj.* Happening before or leading up to a main action.—**preliminaries** *n. pl.*  
**premature** (prē'mə-choōr-, toōr, tyoōr') *adj.* Too early or too soon.—**prematurely** *adv.*  
**premises** (prēm'îs-əz) *n. pl.* A building and the area surrounding it.  
**presentiment** (pri-zēn'tə-mənt) *n.* A feeling that a particular thing will happen.  
**preserve** (pri-zûrv') *n.* An area set aside for the protection of wildlife.  
**preside** (pri-zîd') *v.* To hold the position of authority.  
**presumably** (pri-zōō' mə-blē) *adv.* Probably.  
**presume** (pri-zōōm') *v.* To take for granted.  
**presumption** (pri-zūmp'shən) *n.* Boldness; forwardness.  
**prevail** (pri-vāl') *v.* 1. To succeed. 2. To be effective. 3. To remain in force.  
**prevalent** (prēv'ə-lənt) *adj.* Common or widespread.  
**prim** (prim) *adj.* Neat and trim.  
**primness** (prim'nəs) *n.* Neatness.  
**privation** (pri-vā'shən) *n.* The lack of the basic needs or comforts of life.  
**probe** (prōb) *n.* An instrument used to explore a wound or body cavity.  
**procure** (prō-kyōōr', prə-) *v.* To get.  
**prodigious** (prə-dîj'əs) *adj.* Enormous; impressive in size or extent.—**prodigiously** *adv.*  
**profane** (prō-fān', prə-) *v.* To treat sacred things with contempt.—**profaner** *n.*  
**profanity** (prō-fān'ə-tē, prə-) *n.* Disrespectful or irreverent language.  
**profess** (prə-fēs, prə-) *v.* To declare openly.  
**profound** (prə-found', prə-) *adj.* Complete; deep.  
**profusion** (prə-fyōō'zhən, prə-) *n.* An abundance.  
**proliferate** (prō-lîf'ə-rāt') *v.* To increase quickly and in great quantity.  
**prominent** (prōm'ə-nənt) *adj.* Very noticeable.  
**promiscuous** (prə-mîs'kyōō-əs) *adj.* In a haphazard way.—**promiscuously** *adv.*  
**prone** (prōn) *adj.* Lying flat.

**proposition** (pröp'ə-zīsh'ən) *n.* **1.** A plan or idea offered for consideration. **2.** In math, a problem to be solved.

**proprietor** (prə-prī'ə-ter) *n.* An owner.

**proprieties** (prə-prī'ə-tēz) *n. pl.* Accepted behavior in polite society.

**prosperity** (prös-pēr'ə-tē) *n.* Wealth; success.

**prostrate** (prös'trät') *v.* **1.** To be flat; **2.** To kneel or fall to the ground in humility or surrender.—*adj.* lying flat.

**protozoa** (prö'tə-zō'ə) *n. pl.* Microscopic organisms.

**protract** (prö-träkt') *v.* To prolong.

**protrude** (prö-trööd') *v.* To jut out.

**provender** (pröv'en-dər) *n.* Food.

**Providence** (pröv'ə-dəns, -dəns') *n.* God.

**provision** (prə-vīzh'ən) *n.* A stock of food in store for future use.

**provoke** (prə-vök') *v.* To anger.

**prow** (prou) *n.* The front part of a ship.

**prudence** (prööd' əns) *n.* Cautious behavior.

**prune** (pröön) *v.* To cut off dead or live parts of a plant in order to improve growth or shape.

**psychological** (sī'kə-löj'ī-kəl) *adj.* Pertaining to the mind.

**puke** (pyöök) *v.* To vomit.

**pungent** (pün'jənt) *adj.* Sharp or bitter taste or smell.

## Q

**quack** (kwäk) *n.* Someone who pretends to have a great deal of knowledge and skill in a certain field.

**quadruped** (kwöd' röö-pēd') *adj.* Four-footed.

**qualm** (kwäm, kwöm) *n.* Uneasiness or misgiving.

**quarry** (kwôr'ē, kwör'ē) *n.* An animal that is being hunted. **2.** A place where building stone is taken from the ground.

**quench** (kwēnch) *v.* To put an end to.

**querulous** (kwēr'ə-ləs, kwēr'yə-) *adj.* Complaining.

**quest** (kwēst) *n.* A search.

**quibble** (kwīb'əl) *v.* To argue at length the minor details of a topic.

**quirk** (kwürk) *n.* A strange character trait or mannerism.

**quiver** (kwīv'ər) *n.* A container for arrows.

**quizzical** kwīz'ī-kəl) *adj.* In a questioning way.—**quizzically** *adv.*

## R

**radical** (räd'i-kəl) *adj.* **1.** Basic. **2.** Extreme.

**rakish** (rā'kīsh) *adj.* Having a carefree, dashing appearance.—**rakishly** *adv.*

**rampart** (rām'pärt) *n.* A protective wall encircling a city or fort.

**random** (răn'dəm) *adj.* Purposeless; haphazard.

**ransack** (răn'săk') *v.* To search thoroughly.

**rapier** (rā'pē-ər) *n.* A long, slender, two-edged sword.

**raptor** (răp'tər) *n.* A predatory bird.

**rapture** (răp'chər) *n.* Ecstatic feeling.

**rapturous** (răp'chər-əs) *adj.* Feeling great joy.

**rash** (răsh) *adj.* Reckless.

**ravage** (răv'ij) *v.* To destroy; lay waste.—*n.* Destruction.

**ravenous** (răv'ən-əs) *adj.* Very hungry.—**ravenously** *adv.*

**raze** (rāz) *v.* To tear down, as a building.

**rebuke** (rī-byöök') *v.* to scold sharply.

**recalcitrant** (rī-kăl'sə-trənt) *adj.* Difficult to control.—**recalcitrance** *n.*

**receptacle** (rī-sēp'tə-kəl) *n.* A container.

**recess** (rē'sēs, rī-sēs') *n.* A hollow place or indentation in a wall.

**recline** (rī-klin') *v.* To lie down or lean back.

**recoil** (rī-koil') *v.* To draw or fall back.

**recompense** (rēk'əm-pēns') *n.* Payment; reward.

**reconcile** (rēk'ən-sil') *v.* **1.** To accept or agree to something. **2.** To become friendly again.

**reconnoiter** (rē'kə-noi'tər, rēk'ə-) *v.* To explore or inspect in order to seek out information.

**recourse** (rē-kōrs') *n.* A turning to someone or something for help.

**rectory** (rēk'tə-rē) *n.* The house in which the minister of a church lives.

**redress** (rī-drēs') *v.* To set right; make amends—

**redresser** *n.*

**reek** (rēk) *v.* To give off smoke or steam or odors.

**reeve** (rēv) *n.* The chief officer of a town.

**reflect** (rī-flēkt') *v.* **1.** To think seriously. **2.** To give back a likeness.

ă pat/ă pay/ăr care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f five/g gag/h hat/hw which/ī pit/ī pie/īr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ă about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ă Fr. ami/cē Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ū Fr. tu, Ger. über/KH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.



**reflection** (rĭ-flĕk'shən) *n.* **1.** Careful thought. **2.** An image of something.

**refute** (rĭ-fyŭōt') *v.* To prove to be wrong or false.

**regalia** (rĭ-gāl'ya, -gāl'lē-ə) *n.* Magnificent clothes.

**regulation** (rĕg'yā-lā'shən) *adj.* Required by rule or law.

**reiterate** (rĕ-ĭt'ə-rāt') *v.* To say over and over again.

**relay** (rĕ'lā, rĭ-lā') *n.* A fresh supply of something.

**relentless** (rĭ-lĕnt'lis) *adj.* Unyielding.

**relevant** (rĕl'ə-vənt) *adj.* Important to the matter under consideration.—**relevancy** *n.*

**relic** (rĕl'ik) *n.* An object from the past that is a keepsake or souvenir.

**relinquish** (rĭ-lĭng'kwish) *v.* To give up.

**relish** rĕl'ish) *v.* To enjoy the taste of; like.

**reluctance** (rĭ-lŭk'təns) *n.* Nonwillingness.

**reluctant** (rĭ-luk'tənt) *adj.* Unwilling.

**remonstrance** (rĭ-mŏn'strəns) *n.* Protest.

**remonstrate** (rĭ-mŏn'strat') *v.* To protest.

**remorse** (rĭ-mŏrs') *n.* A feeling of guilt for having done something wrong.

**remote** (rĭ-mŏt') *adj.* Distant; slight.—**remotely** *adv.*

**render** (rĕn'dər) *v.* To express in one's own way.

**renowned** (rĭ-nŏund') *adj.* Famous.

**reparation** (rĕp'ə-rā'shən) *n.* Something paid or given to make up for an injury or loss.

**repast** (rĭ-pāst', -pāst') *n.* A meal.

**repertoire** (rĕp'ər-twār, -tŏr) *n.* The range of techniques or skills of a particular person or group.

**replenish** (rĭ-plĕn'ish) *v.* To resupply with fuel, or goods.

**repose** (rĭ-pŏz') *v.* To lie at rest.—*n.* Calmness.

**reprimand** (rĕp'rā-mānd', -mānd') *n.* A severe scolding.

**reproach** (rĭ-prŏch') *v.* To blame or criticize.

**repugnance** (rĭ-pŭg'nəns) *n.* A feeling of intense dislike.

**reserve** (rĕ-zŭrv') *n.* Self-restraint.

**resiliency** (rĭ-zil'yən-sē) *n.* The ability to return quickly to good health and spirits after an illness or tragedy.

**resolute** (rĕz'ə-lŏōt') *adj.* Determined.

**resolve** (rĭ-zŏlv') *n.* Firm decision; determination.

**resonant** (rĕz'ə-nənt) *adj.* Having a full, rich sound.

**resort** (rĭ-zŏrt) *v.* To go often.

**resources** (rĕ'sŏrs'əz, -zŏrs'əz) *n. pl.* Available money or property.

**restitution** (rĕs'tə-tŏō'shən, -tyŏō'shən.) *n.* The making good or paying for damage or loss.

**restive** (rĕs'tiv) *adj.* Nervous; restless.

**restorative** (rĭ-stŏr'ə-tiv, rĭ-stŏr'-) *n.* Something that brings back life or strength.

**retainer** (rĭ-tā'nər) *n.* Someone in the service of another.

**retort** (rĭ-tŏrt') *v.* To answer in a sharp, quick way.

**retribution** (rĕt'rə-byŏō'shən) *n.* Something given or done as a repayment or reward.

**retrieve** (rĭ-trĕv') *v.* **1.** To bring back. **2.** To regain.

**rev** (rĕv) *v. Informal.* To cause an engine or motor to go faster.

**revel** (rĕv'əl) *v.* To take great pleasure in.

**revelation** (rĕv'ə-lā'shən) *n.* The act of making something known.

**revelry** (rĕv'əl-rĕ) *n.* Very loud merrymaking.

**reverberate** (rĭ-vŭr'bə-rāt') *v.* To make a loud, echoing sound.

**revere** (rĭ-vĭr') *v.* To regard with great respect and awe.

**reverence** (rĕv'ər-əns) *n.* Profound respect.

**reverie** (rĕv'ər-ē) *n.* A daydream.

**revulsion** (rĭ-vŭl'shən) *n.* A feeling of disgust.

**rheum** (rŏōm) *n.* A watery discharge from the eyes, mouth, or nose.

**ricochet** (rĭk'ə-shā', -shĕt') *v.* To skip off a surface after striking it at an angle.

**righteous** (rĭ'chəs) *adj.* Morally right; fair—**righteously** *adv.*—**righteousness** *n.*

**rimy** (rĭm'ē) *adj.* Frosty.

**rite** (rīt) *n.* A religious or other formal ceremony.

**ritual** (rĭch'ŏō-əl) *n.* A set of actions regularly followed in performing a ceremony.

**ritualistic** (rĭch'ŏō-əl-ĭs'tik) *adj.* Ceremonial; following a set ritual.

**rivet** (rĭv'it) *v.* To hold or fix (the attention of).

**roan** (rŏn) *adj.* Reddish-brown.

**roister** (rŏis'tər) *v.* To behave in a lively and noisy way.

**romp** (rŏmp) *v.* To play in a carefree, lively way.

**rowel** (rou'əl) *n.* A small wheel with sharp teeth on the back of a spur.

**ruddy** (rŭd'ē) *adj.* Reddish.

**rueful** (rŏō'fəl) *adj.* **1.** Sorrowful; mournful. **2.** Showing regret.

**ruminate** rŏō'mə-nāt) *v.* To think about something over and over again.

**rumination** (rŏō'mə-nā'shən) *n.* **1.** The chewing of cud. **2.** Lengthy thought.

**rummage** (rŭm'ij) *v.* To find by searching through.

**runnel** (rūn'əl) *n.* A little stream.  
**ruse** (rōōz) *n.* A trick.

## S

**saddlebow** (sād'l-bō') *n.* The arched front part of a saddle.

**sagacious** (sə-gā'shəs) *adj.* Knowledgeable.

**sage** (sāj) *adj.* Wise.

**sallow** (sāl'ō) *adj.* Having a sickly, pale-yellow color.

**salvation** (sāl-vā'shən) *n.* **1.** A rescue from evil or danger. **2.** The person or thing that makes rescue possible **3.** Redemption.

**samovar** (sām'ə-vār', sām'ə-vār') *n.* A metal urn with a spigot, used in making tea.

**sanctuary** (sāngk'choo-ēr'ē) *n.* A sacred place.

**sandalwood** (sān'dəl-wood') *n.* A wood from an Asian tree, used for woodcarving and furniture.

**satchel** (säch'əl) *n.* A small suitcase or bag.

**savor** (sā'vər) *n.* A special taste or smell.

**scion** (sī'ən) *n.* Descendant.

**sconce** (skōns) *n.* A wall bracket for candles or light.

**scour** (skour) *v.* To search through.

**screech** (skrēch) *v.* To scream in a high-pitched, harsh voice.

**scruple** (skrōō'pəl) *n.* A feeling of uneasiness about doing things that one thinks are wrong.

**scrutiny** (skrōōt'n-ē) *n.* A close, careful inspection.

**securities** (sī-kyōōr'ə-tēz) *n. pl.* Stocks and bonds.

**seethe** (sēth) *v.* To boil.

**seminary** (sēm'ə-nēr'ē) *n.* A school where priests, ministers, or rabbis are trained.

**sensuous** (sēn'shōō-əs) *adj.* Pleasing to the senses; pleasurable.

**sentiment** (sēn'tə-mənt) *n.* The thought or feeling behind a statement or action.

**sepulcher** (sēp'əl-kər) *n.* A burial chamber; tomb.

**sequin** (sē'kwīn) *n.* A small, shiny metal disk sewn in fabric as decoration.

**serene** (sī-rēn') *adj.* Calm.

**serge** (sūrj) *n.* A heavy, smooth fabric, usually of wool.

**serpentine** (sūr'pən-tēn', -tīn') *adj.* Winding.

**serrated** (sē'rā'tīd) *adj.* Having sawlike edges or surfaces.

**shackle** (shāk'əl) *n.* A device used to prevent freedom of movement.—*v.* To restrict or confine as with chains or manacles.

**shamble** (shām'bəl) *v.* To walk in an awkward, shuffling way.

**sheer** (shīr) *adj.* Very steep.

**shipwright** (shīp'rīt') *n.* A carpenter who builds or repairs ships.

**shirk** (shûrk) *v.* To put off or avoid doing something that should be done.—**shirker** *n.*

**shrift** (shrift) *n. Archaic.* Confession to a priest.

**shroud** (shroud) *n.* A burial cloth.

**sibling** (sīb'līng) *n.* A brother or sister.

**sinewy** (sīn'yōō-ē) *adj.* Muscular.

**singular** (sīng'gyə-lər) *adj.* Extraordinary; strange.—**singularly** *adv.*

**singularity** (sīng'gyə-lār'ə-tē) *n.* Distinctness; individuality.

**sinister** (sīn'ī-stər) *adj.* Appearing evil or wicked.

**sinuosity** (sīn'yōō-ōs'ə-tē) *n.* A winding and twisting in shape or movement.

**skeptical** (skēp'tī-kəl) *adj.* Doubting; questioning.

**slaughter** (slō'tər) *v.* To kill violently.—*n.* Massacre.

**slither** (slith'ər) *v.* A sliding and gliding movement.

**slouch** (slouch) *v.* To walk, sit, or stand in a drooping way.

**slumbrous** (slūm'brəs) *adj.* Causing one to be sleepy or relaxed.

**smite** (smīt) *v.* **1.** To afflict. **2.** To strike forcefully.—**smiter** *n.*

**smithy** (smīth'ē, smīth'ē) *n.* A workshop where metal is heated and hammered into particular objects.

**smolder** (smōl'dər) *v.* To burn without flame.

**sniper** (snī'pər) *n.* A person who shoots at others from a hidden position.

**solar** (sō'lər) *adj.* Coming from the sun.

**solemnize** (sōl'əm-nīz') *v.* To perform a formal ceremony.

**solicitous** (sə-līs'ə-təs) *adj.* Showing concern.

**solicitude** (sə-līs'ə-tōōd', tyōōd') *n.* Concern.

**solitary** (sōl'ə-tēr' ē) *adj.* Alone.

**solitude** (sōl'ə-tōōd, -tyōōd) *n.* **1.** Aloneness. **2.** A lonely out-of-the way place.

**sordid** (sôr'dīd) *adj.* Dirty.

ă pat/ă pay/ăr care/ă father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē belf fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/ī pit/ī pie/īr pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ə about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ă *Fr.* ami/œ *Fr.* feu, *Ger.* schön/ü *Fr.* tu, *Ger.* über/KH *Ger.* ich, *Scot.* loch/N *Fr.* bon.

**spar** (spär) *v.* To exchange words in argument; dispute.

**spasmodic** (späz-möd'ik) *adj.* Characterized by irregular and excitable movements.

**spectral** (spēc'trəl) *adj.* Ghostly.

**speculation** (spëk'yä-lä'shən) *n.* A theory or conclusion based on guesswork.

**spherical** (sfir'ri-kəl) *adj.* Round.

**spinnet** (spîn'it) *n.* A small, upright piano.

**spontaneous** (spôn-tä'nē-əs) *adj.* Happening so naturally that there appears to be no outside influence.—**spontaneously** *adv.*

**sprint** (sprînt) *v.* To run a short distance at top speed.

**spruce** (sprōös) *adj.* Neat in appearance.

**spume** (spyōöm) *n.* Foam or froth.—*v.* To foam or froth.

**squat** (skwöt) *adj.* Thick; low and broad.

**squeamish** (skwē'mish) *adj.* Oversensitive—**squeamishness** *n.*

**squeegee** (skwē'jē') *n.* A T-shaped tool with a rubber blade used to wipe water from a surface.

**squirt** (skwûrt) *n.* *Informal.* A small or young person.

**staccato** (stä-kä'tō) *adj.* Made up of separate, short, distinct sounds.

**stagnant** (stäg'nänt) *adj.* Not moving.

**stamina** (stäm'ä-nä) *n.* The ability to resist fatigue, illness, or hardship.

**stance** (stäns) *n.* The standing posture of a person or animal.

**staple** (stä'pəl) *n.* A U-shaped piece of metal driven into a surface to keep a hook, bolt, or wiring in place.

**statistic** (stä-tis'tik) *n.* A numerical item of information about a specific subject.—**statistically** *adv.*

**stave** (stäv) *v.* To break or smash.

**steep** (stēp) *v.* To immerse; involve.

**sterile** (stēr-əl, -il) *adj.* Without vitality or imagination.

**stipulation** (stîp'yä-lä'shən) *n.* An agreed-upon condition or term, as in a contract.

**stockade** (stök'äd') *n.* A fort or enclosed area used for protection or imprisonment.

**strait** (strät) *n.* A narrow waterway connecting two larger bodies of water.

**strategy** (strät'ä-jē) *n.* A plan of action or scheme to achieve a specific purpose.

**strew** (strōō) *v.* To cover by scattering.

**suave** (swäv, swäv) *adj.* Refined; sophisticated.

**sublime** (sä-blîm') *adj.* Inspiring awe; impressive.—**sublimity** (sä-blîm'ä-tē) *n.*

**subordinate** (sä-bôr'dä-nît) *adj.* **1.** Of inferior rank or position. **2.** Under the control or authority of another.

**subside** (säb-sîd') *v.* To become less active or intense.

**suffice** (sä-fis') *v.* To be enough.

**suffuse** (sä-fyōōz') *v.* To spread through or fill.

**sullen** (sül'ən) *adj.* Gloomy; slow.—**sullenly** *adv.*

**sultry** (sül'trē) *adj.* Very hot.

**sumptuous** (sümp'chōō-əs) *adj.* Magnificent; having the appearance of being costly.

**supercilious** (sōō'pär-sîl'ē-əs) *adj.* Haughty; scornful.—**superciliously** *adv.*

**superscription** (sōō'pär-skrip'shən) *n.* Something written above or outside another thing.

**supple** (süp'əl) *adj.* Able to move and bend easily.

**suppliant** süp'li-änt) *n.* A beggar.

**supplication** (süp'li-kä'shən) *n.* A humble prayer or request.

**surmise** (sär-mîz') *v.* To guess.

**surmount** (sär-mount') *v.* To be at the top of.

**surpassing** (sär-päs'îng, -päs'îng) *adj.* Exceptional.—**surpassingly** *adv.*

**sustain** (sä-stän') *v.* To support; encourage.

**swagger** (swäg'ər) *v.* To boast; brag.—**swaggering** *n.*

**swarthy** (swör'thē) *adj.* Having a dark complexion.

**swirl** (swûrl) *v.* To move with a twisting motion.

**symmetrical** (sî-mët'ri-kəl) *adj.* **1.** Showing exact correspondence in shape, size, and arrangement of elements. **2.** Harmonious in arrangement.

**synopsis** (sî-nöp'sîs) *n.* A brief summary.

## T

**tactics** (täk'tîks) *n.* *pl.* Skillful methods used to achieve a specific goal.

**taint** (tänt) *v.* To infect; spoil.

**tally** (täl'ē) *v.* To count.

**tamper** (täm'pär) *v.* To interfere with in order to damage.

**tangible** (tan'jə-bəl) *adj.* Capable of being touched or seen; real.

**taper** (tä'pär) *n.* A small candle.

**taroc** (tä'rək) *n.* A card game.

**tarp** (tärp) *n.* Waterproof canvas, short for *tarpaulin*.

**tawny** (tō'nē) *adj.* Light brown.

**tedious** (tē'dē-əs) *adj.* Tiresome.

**temper** (tēm'pär) *v.* To moderate; calm.



**tempered** (tēm'pərd) *adj.* Having the proper degree of hardness or elasticity (metal).

**tendrill** (tēn'drəl) *n.* A long, slender, part of a climbing plant, used for clinging to some object.

**tentative** (tēn'tə-tīv) *adj.* Uncertain.—**tentatively** *adv.*

**termination** (tūr'mə-nā'shən) *n.* The end of something.

**terrain** (tə-rān', tē-) *n.* 1. A particular stretch of land. 2. Ground.

**terrarium** (tə-rār'ē-əm) *n.* A small container enclosing small plants or animals.

**terse** (tūrs) *adj.* Free of unnecessary words.

**testy** (tēs'tē) *adj.* Touchy.—**testily** *adv.*

**tether** (tēth'ər) *v.* To confine an animal to a certain area by tying or chaining it.

**texture** (tēks'chər) *n.* Appearance.

**theoretical** (thē'a-rēt'i-kəl) *adj.* Based on a general plan or idea.—**theoretically** *adv.*

**thicket** (thick'it) *n.* A thick growth of small trees.

**thong** (thōng, thōng) *n.* A narrow strip of leather or other material used for tying.

**thresh** (thrēsh) *v.* To beat grain out of its thick outside covering.

**thrive** (thrīv) *v.* To prosper.

**throes** (thrōz) *n. pl.* A condition of painful struggle.

**throng** (thrōng) *n.* A very large group of people or things.

**throttle** (thrōt'l) *n.* A device that controls the amount of fuel entering an engine.

**thwart** (thwōrt) *v.* To frustrate; defeat.

**tidings** (tī'dīngz) *n. pl.* News.

**tier** (tīr) *n.* One of a series of rows or layers placed one on top of the other.

**timorous** (tīm'ər-əs) *adj.* Timid.—**timorously** *adv.*

**titanic** (tī-tān'ik) *adj.* Huge.

**tithe** (tīth) *n.* 1. A tax or contribution. 2. One tenth or any small amount.

**traipse** (trāps) *v. Informal.* To walk.

**tranquil** (trān'kwəl) *adj.* Calm; motionless.

**transgression** (trāns-grēsh'ən, trānz-) *n.* 1. The breaking of a law. 2. The act of going beyond certain limits.

**transition** (trān-zīsh'ən, -sīsh'ən) *n.* The passing from one condition or form to another.

**travail** (trə-vāl', trāv'āl') *n.* Agony.

**traversed** (trə-vûrsd') *adj.* Crossed; traveled over.

**treacherous** (trēch'ər-əs) *adj.* 1. Unreliable; dangerous. 2. Disloyal.

**treachery** (trēch'ə-rē) *n.* Betrayal.

**treble** (trēb'əl) *n.* A high-pitched voice.

**trellis** (trēl'is) *n.* A frame made of strips of wood crossing each other to form square or diamond patterns.

**trespass** (trēs'pəs) *v.* 1. To enter another's property or land without permission. 2. To intrude upon another's privacy or time.

**tributary** (trīb'yə-tēr'ē) *n.* A stream flowing into a river.

**trilogy** (trīl'ə-jē) *n.* A group of three works on a related theme.

**tripe** (trīp) *n.* The stomach lining of cattle, used as food.

**trowel** (trou'əl) *n.* A flat-bladed tool used for applying plaster.

**truculence** (trūk'yə-ləns) *n.* Eagerness to fight.

**truffle** (trūf'əl) *n.* A potato-shaped, edible, mushroomlike plant.

**tucker** (tūk'ər) *v. Informal.* To tire.—*To tucker out.*

**tumult** (tūm'əlt, tyūm'ə-) *n.* 1. Great noise and confusion. 2. Emotional disturbance.

**tumultuous** (tə-mūl'chūm-əs) *adj.* Confused and excited.

**tundra** (tūn'drə) *n.* Treeless land in arctic region.

**turnkey** (tūrn'kē) *n.* A person in charge of the keys in a jail.

**tyro** (tī'rō) *n.* A person with no experience in a particular field.

## U

**ulterior** (ūl'tīr'ē-ər) *adj.* Remote; beyond what is immediately evident.

**uncanny** (ūn'kān'ē) *adj.* Weird, mysterious.

**uncouth** (ūn'kūth) *adj.* 1. Crude. 2. Clumsy.

**undulation** (un'jū-lā'shən, ūn'dyā, ūn'də-) *n.* 1. A wavy shape. 2. Rising and falling with regularity, like waves.

**unflagging** (ūn-flāg'ing) *adj.* Not weakening.

**uniform** (yūm'fōrm) *adj.* Unchanging; consistent.—**uniformly** *adv.*

ā pat/ā pay/ār care/ā father/b bib/ch church/d deed/ē pet/ē be/f fife/g gag/h hat/hw which/i pit/i pie/ir pier/j judge/k kick/l lid, needle/m mum/n no, sudden/ng thing/ō pot/ō toe/ō paw, for/oi noise/ou out/ōō took/ōō boot/p pop/r roar/s sauce/sh ship, dish/t tight/th thin, path/th this, bathe/ū cut/ūr urge/v valve/w with/y yes/z zebra, size/zh vision/ā about, item, edible, gallop, circus/ā Fr. ami/cæ Fr. feu, Ger. schön/ū Fr. tu, Ger. über/kH Ger. ich, Scot. loch/N Fr. bon.

**uninhibited** (ün'in-hīb'ə-tīd) *adj.* Unrestrained.—  
**uninhibitedly** *adv.*  
**unobstructed** (ün'əb-strūkt'əd) *adj.* Unhindered.  
**unobtrusive** (ün'əb-trōō'siv) *adj.* Unnoticeable.—  
**unobtrusively** *adv.*  
**unorthodox** (ün-ōr'thə-dōks') *adj.* Unconventional;  
 breaking tradition.  
**unparalleled** (ün'pār'ə-lēld') *adj.* Unequaled.  
**unsavory** (ün'sā'və-rē) *adj.* Offensive; disagreeable.  
**unscathed** (ün'skāthd') *adj.* Unharmed.  
**unscrupulous** (ün'skrōō'pyə-ləs) *adj.* Not caring  
 about what is right or wrong.  
**urbane** (ūr'bān') *adj.* Polite; refined.  
**usurp** (yōō-sūrp', -zūrp') *v.* To seize power or pos-  
 sessions illegally.—**usurper** *n.*

## V

**vagabond** (vāg'ə-bōnd') *n.* A wanderer.  
**vague** (vāg) *adj.* Unclear in thought or expression.  
**valedictory** (vāl'ə-dik'tə-rē) *adj.* Pertaining to a  
 parting or farewell.  
**valiant** (vāl'yənt) *adj.* Brave.  
**valor** (vāl'ər) *n.* Bravery.  
**variable** (vār'ē-ə-bəl) *adj.* Changeable.  
**varmint** (vār'mənt) *n.* A troublesome person or ani-  
 mal.  
**vault** (vōlt) *v.* To leap.—*n.* **1.** An underground room  
 or cave with an arched ceiling. **2.** A burial cham-  
 ber.  
**veery** (vīr'ē) *n.* A reddish-brown thrush.  
**vehement** (vē'ə-mənt) *adj.* Expressing intense  
 emotion.—**vehemently** *adv.*  
**vendor** (vēn'dər) *n.* A person who sells.  
**venerable** (vēn'ər-ə-bəl) *adj.* Deserving respect be-  
 cause of age and dignity.  
**vengeance** (vēn'jəns) *n.* The act of punishing an-  
 other (or desire to do so) in return for an injury or  
 wrong.  
**venison** (vēn'ə-sən, -zən) *n.* Flesh of deer.  
**venture** (vēn'chər) *v.* To risk; undertake.  
**verdict** (vūr-dikt) *n.* A decision.  
**verily** (vēr'ə-lē) *adv.* Archaic. Truly.  
**veritable** (vēr'ə-tə-bəl) *adj.* Actual; true.—**veritably**  
*adv.*  
**vermillion** (vər-mil'yən) *n.* Bright red.  
**versatile** (vūr'sə-təl) *adj.* Having many uses or serv-  
 ing many purposes.  
**vertical** (vūr'tī-kəl) *adj.* Going straight up and  
 down.

**vestibule** (vēs'tə-byōōl') *n.* A small entrance room.  
**vex** (vēks) *v.* To irritate.  
**vexation** (vēk-sā'shən) *n.* Annoyance.  
**vial** (vī'əl) *n.* A small bottle for liquids.  
**vicarious** (vī-kār'ē-əs, vī-) *adj.* Experienced through  
 imagined sharing in another's activities.—  
**vicariously** *adv.*  
**vicious** (vish'əs) *adj.* Evil; dangerous.  
**victual** (vīt'l) *n.* Food.  
**vile** (vil) *adj.* Disgusting.  
**vintage** (vin'tij) *n.* Wine of a particular year and  
 place.  
**virtually** (vūr'chōō-ə-lē) *adv.* Practically; nearly.  
**virtuous** (vūr'chōō-əs) *adj.* Righteous; moral.  
**vista** (vis'tə) *n.* A view.  
**vizier** (vī-zīr', viz'yər) *n.* A high officer in the gov-  
 ernment of a Moslem country.  
**void** (void) *adj.* Empty.  
**vulnerable** (vūl'nər-ə-bəl) *adj.* Open to attack; sus-  
 ceptible.

## W

**waddle** (wōd'l) *v.* To walk with short steps that cause  
 the body to sway from side to side.  
**waft** (wāft, wāft) *v.* To carry gently through the air.  
**wainscot** (wān'skət, -skāt') *v.* To line a room or a  
 wall with fabric or wood paneling.  
**waive** (wāv) *v.* To put off for another time.  
**wane** (wān) *n.* A gradual dimming or lessening.  
**wanton** (wōn'tən) *adj.* Unrestrained.  
**warrant** wōr'ənt, wōr'-) *n.* An official order author-  
 izing an arrest, search, or seizure.  
**waver** (wā'vər) *v.* To be unsure or unsteady.  
**wheedle** (hwēd'l) *v.* To coax and flatter to get some-  
 thing.  
**whelm** (hwēlm) *v.* To plunge in water.  
**whet** (hwēt) *v.* To stimulate. Also **whetten**.  
**whew** (hwā) *n.* The watery part of milk that remains  
 after cheese has been made from it.  
**whimper** (hwīm'pər) *v.* To cry and sob quietly.  
**wicket** (wīk'it) *n.* A small gate.  
**wily** (wī'lē) *adj.* Tricky; sly.  
**wreak** (rēk) *v.* **1.** To cause harm to. **2.** To express  
 rage or hostility.

## Z

**zealous** (zēl'əs) *adj.* Enthusiastically devoted to a  
 particular interest.  
**zenith** (zē'nith) *n.* The highest point in the heav-  
 ens.

## OUTLINE OF SKILLS

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